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The Shape of Things

ALL PARTIES IN BRITAIN AGREE THAT A new general election is inevitable before long but that it would prove bad medicine for the side which precipitated it in the immediate future. Hence the political situation seems likely to simmer for a while, with government and opposition sparring cautiously. The Parliamentary Labor Party accepted by a large majority Prime Minister Attlee's view that the election results indicated a desire on the part of the country for moderation and the "King's Speech" is expected to set forth a program of relatively non-controversial measures. This may be good short-term tactics, but as Howard K. Smith suggests in a dispatch from London on page 221, an influential section of the Labor Party will press for the adoption of a bolder long-term strategy. "Nye" Bevan and his friends, together with the "Keep Left" group, believe that the situation calls for more socialism, not less. They will concede, perhaps, that a more radical program might lead to a Tory victory at the next election, but they count on the educational experience of Toryism in office to effect the conversion of middle-of-the-road voters and insure a bigger and better Labor victory in, say, 1953. Internal discussion of such issues will be intense in the coming weeks, and they will be hotly debated at the Labor Party annual conference in May. In Parliament, however, we have no doubt that the party will present a united and well-disciplined front. In reconstructing his Cabinet, Mr. Attlee has wisely maintained its representative character. James Griffiths, an able and popular veteran who made a fine record as Minister of National Insurance, has been promoted to the Colonial Office. Bevan has gone back to the Ministry of Health, Shinwell, a reputed left-winger, has moved up a step to the Ministry of Defense, and John Strachey, whose good work as Minister of Food had not saved him from many unfair attacks by the Tory press, has been made Secretary of State for War.

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AFTER STRACHEY'S APPOINTMENT THE *Evening Standard* of London broke all previous Tory records by denouncing him as an "avowed Communist" and demanding his immediate dismissal from the War Office. To people familiar with John Strachey's record

and writings during and since the war the charges appeared monstrous; his earlier sympathies had been blasted out of existence by the obstructive tactics of British Communists after Moscow had launched its 1940 propaganda campaign against the "imperialist war." But Strachey remains a Socialist and the Beaverbrook paper, forced by vigorous denials and counterattacks to retreat from its first position, is now accusing him of favoring Marxism and adhering to "communism as a creed." Since Mr. Attlee's prompt defense of his War Minister has been taken up by the *Manchester Guardian* and other influential papers outside the Labor camp, the Beaverbrook barrage will probably soon subside. But much damage has been done. The Fuchs case stirred a mood of tension and suspicion which the *Evening Standard* has recklessly exploited. If socialism is hereafter to be equated with communism by Britain's Tories, and Socialist ministers held unfit to handle secret intelligence, a very nasty political struggle is in prospect. The sooner responsible Conservative leaders disavow any such views the better it will be for Britain's future.

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THE 140 PARTIES REGISTERED FOR THE GREEK elections had shrunk in numbers through mergers to a still impressive twenty-three by last Sunday, election day. The latest political combination was formed around the liberal general, Nicholas Plastiras. With a colorful career behind him, that included his defeat of the Turks at Eritrea in 1922, a revolt in the same year which forced the abdication of King Constantine, and his return to Greece in 1945, after a long exile, to head the government which took over after the December revolution, Plastiras considers himself the man of the hour. He has nevertheless several things against him—first, the natural handicap of twelve years of absence, and second, and more important, the resentment of the British, who charge him with lack of cooperation in their plans for the eastern Mediterranean. Challenging him also are dozens of other would-be Premiers. Venizelos, who as the years pass resembles less and less his forceful father, has carried the Liberal Party over to the right; he is now the underling of Tsaldaris, still the real favorite of the reactionaries. Papandreou poses as a Socialist, though in fact he turns as the political wind blows and has lost the support of most of the party rank and file. Sofianopoulos, an excellent campaigner and a genuine

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progressive, is regarded by the reactionary groups and leaders as pro-Russian because he has advocated an attempt to resolve the great-power rivalry over Greece. Based on the incomplete returns available at press time, Sofianopoulos and Plastiras appear to have surprised the forecasters by running neck and neck with Tsaldaris. If the left *should* win, the effect in Greece—and abroad—would be tremendous. *

WE ARE NOT MUCH IMPRESSED BY EITHER Moscow's or Washington's interpretation of the significance of the ruble's revaluation. It is not as sensational a proof of growing financial strength as the Soviet government would have us believe; but neither can it be written off as a purely propaganda effort. The statement of the Soviet Council of Ministers announced that henceforth the ruble would have a fixed exchange value of 25 instead of 19 cents, and declared that "the purchasing power of the ruble has become higher than its official exchange rate." Actually the ruble was overvalued at the former rate and will be still more overvalued at the new. For even though its gold content will theoretically make it equivalent to 25 cents, it does not have anything like that amount of purchasing power. Prices in Russia remain extremely high. Allowing for cuts announced simultaneously with the revaluation, Will Lissner of the *New York Times* finds that butter costs \$4.58 a pound in Moscow, tea \$16.32 a pound, eggs \$5.10 a dozen, and men's shoes (calf) \$85 a pair. Obviously no one will willingly exchange dollars for rubles in these circumstances, and if the Soviet government were to permit the test of convertibility, foreign owners of rubles would certainly hasten to turn them into gold. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that since the currency reform of December, 1947, the Soviet government has three times been able to reduce prices of a wide range of commodities. This suggests a steady rise in the supply of consumer goods in relation to the supply of money and an improvement in the Russian standard of living, low as it undoubtedly still is compared with that in most Western countries. The fact that it is moving up rather than down may well impress workers in Asia and even perhaps in France and Italy, where the post-war trend of real wages has been downward.

*

PROPOSERS OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1950 (S. 2246), soon coming up for a vote in Congress, face a hard but not a hopeless fight. Under the bill's provisions a new federal mortgage agency would make loans to non-profit housing cooperatives at government interest rates plus one-quarter of 1 per cent. This is intended to provide housing for "middle-income" families earning from \$2,800 to \$4,400 a year—a third of our population which benefits from neither

the public-housing program nor the expensive products of private building. Since cooperative housing can hardly be branded "socialistic"—co-ops in Scandinavia, in fact, are among the strongest opponents of socialism—why should the bill face such tough sledding? Well, during the depression, when the Federal Housing Agency was set up to tempt timid institutional funds back into the mortgage market, the government guaranteed mortgages and the mortgagees were allowed to charge market interest rates. The FHA—designed as an emergency bureau—is still with us, and finances almost all the rental housing being built in this country as well as most of the small homes. Lending institutions are still allowed to charge home owners an interest rate almost twice that applying to government-guaranteed securities, and speculative builders have been realizing 110 to 120 per cent of their investment costs. The victim, of course, is the unorganized home owner, who pays a tribute exceeding \$30,000,000 annually in excess interest rates—and for jerry-built homes that are the slums of tomorrow. The Housing Act of 1949 squeaked through by a majority of five House votes. But one of its most influential supporters, Robert A. Taft, has now switched sides, and the new legislation is also opposed by the powerful Mortgage Bankers' Association. That is why there is only a slim chance that it can pass.

Lewis's Pyrrhic Victory

ONCE again the perennial war in the coal fields has been called off just at the point where its effects on the national economy threatened to turn from the critical to the catastrophic; once again, at very heavy cost, John L. Lewis has outsmarted the operators and obtained a better contract for "his miners." True, he has had to revise his original terms and agree to omit the "able and willing" clause and to limit "memorial days." But he has won an advance in pay of 70 cents a day and an increase in the welfare royalty of 10 cents a ton, to make a total increase of \$1.35 a day per miner, which it is estimated will add about 20 cents per ton to the cost of coal.

The long deadlock in the negotiations was broken when Judge Keech stuck to the plain record and refused to hold the United Mine Workers' union in contempt because its members had disobeyed orders to return to work. That was a shattering blow to the operators, who had evidently expected the judge to hold that Lewis's "yea" was the legal equivalent of "nay," a feat which called for a psychiatrist rather than a jurist. It meant the collapse of a strategy based on reliance on the Taft-Hartley act to force the miners back to the pits lest their union be made bankrupt. When the court's decision was

closely followed by the President's request for power to seize the mines, the operators realized that the game was up and that they would have to abandon their stand against any contract changes that increased costs. They probably suspected that "just compensation" by the government for the use of their properties would deprive them of most of the bonanza profits that they hope to reap during the months when stockpiles are being replenished and the demand for coal outruns supply.

Yet if Lewis has triumphed, his victory is in many respects a Pyrrhic one, leaving the long-term outlook for the miners as dark as ever. The end of the strike will be followed by a period of feverish activity in the coal fields, but before the last strike-created debts are paid, stocks will be back to normal, and then, all authorities agree, the demand for coal will be far below productive capacity. Lewis himself, in his interview with Arthur Krock published in the *New York Times* of March 3, suggested that 200 working days per year was the maximum miners could expect. There is reason to believe that this estimate is over-optimistic and that three days a week, or 156 days a year, is a more likely average. No doubt the captive mines will be kept busy as long as the steel boom lasts, and the more efficient and advantageously located commercial mines may be able to offer fairly steady employment. But some high-cost pits may go out of production altogether, and others will work spasmodically, providing an average of less than three days a week.

Lewis told Krock that miners "laugh" at the notion that union methods have advanced the use of competitive fuels. Householders, he said, will of course turn to gas when they can, for it is cleaner than coal and saves labor; the lower cost of coal will, however, continue to insure its use by industry. Unhappily for the miners, the changes that have been taking place in fuel technology cannot be brushed off in this cavalier fashion. Even for industry, fuel oil is now considerably cheaper than coal in New York City and in other consuming centers to which it can be brought by water, and a world surplus is likely to reduce its price still farther. Again, the railroads, which used to burn from 20 to 25 per cent of all coal mined, are now so rapidly turning to diesel traction that in a comparatively few years steam locomotives will be rarities.

It is unfair to put the sole blame for these developments on mining wages. Consumers would probably have turned increasingly to natural gas and oil in any circumstances, and Lewis's stop-and-start methods may simply have accelerated an inescapable trend. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the kingdom of King Coal is suffering from an invasion by rivals who show no signs of halting.

The coal industry, as Mr. Truman said in his message to Congress last week, is "sick," and "a positive and

constructive effort to get to the root of the trouble" has become a matter of real urgency. As a first step the President recommended the establishment by Congress of a commission of inquiry to make a thorough study of the problem "in terms of economic, social, and national objectives." We hope Congress will lose no time in adopting this proposal and that both operators and mine workers will lend their support. The new contract may provide a breathing spell, but it will hardly restore stability to this basic industry. And when it expires, new troubles are inevitable unless meanwhile we have found a way of organizing the coal fields and ending the anarchical conditions that have afflicted them for so long.

Death or Diplomacy?

BY FRED A KIRCHWEY

LISTENING to David Lilienthal's first public lecture after his resignation from the Atomic Energy Commission—"that neutron-infested squirrel cage"—was a pleasant change. Here was a man who knew as much as any other about the effects of nuclear fission, brushing away the "black magic and hocus-pocus" that has surrounded it and denouncing with cheerful contempt the whole "cult of doom." The idea that we could scare the Kremlin with threats of bigger and better bombs was nonsense, he thought; "men who are frightened by word pictures do not become the iron rulers of a large part of the earth." More likely we would only succeed in scaring ourselves, with the result that people will "turn aside and think of something else, or turn to fantasy." Either one, said Mr. Lilienthal, would be a blow to national security. Instead, we should take up the challenging task of understanding the great new discoveries (nothing mysterious or very difficult about them) and applying them on a world-wide scale for the benefit of human beings everywhere. He insisted, though without developing the point, that this could only be accomplished by private initiative freed from the restrictions of "government monopoly."

People obviously carried out of the crowded Town Hall meeting an infusion of David Lilienthal's optimism. One man said to his companion: "Some contrast to that slick, souped-up display of death and destruction in *Life* last week, wasn't it? It's good to hear some sense talked for once." Certainly the lecture was a useful corrective to the panic-mongering of the Luce press, of Fulton Lewis, Jr., and the Alsops, of the whole tribe of pigmy prophets who link their pictures of atomic annihilation with detailed "exposés" of America's impotence—based on "statistics" which could only have come from the private files of Marshal Stalin himself—and noisy clamor for more and more horrible explosives

to frighten Moscow into a mood of compliance. But once the feeling of release and refreshment had begun to evaporate, some listeners, like myself, must have become aware of a disturbing hiatus in the thinking of Mr. Lilienthal as revealed by his words, a hiatus that will have to be filled before those words acquire any lasting value.

What the former head of the AEC failed to mention, understandably in view of his personal situation, is the vast complex of political issues that controls all decisions, all policies, in the field of atomic power. Lacking a political settlement with Russia, or at least the beginning of a settlement through specific agreements in critical if limited areas, talk of constructive peace-time uses of the new sources of energy becomes almost meaningless. It may have the effect of snatching men's minds out of a morass of fear that could lead toward fatalism or suicidal violence; it may serve as a bracer like a good cocktail or a shot of vitamin B. But it may also lead people to forget that behind the threats, the corrosive secrecy, the screaming headlines, a great political war is going on in which the stakes are real and valuable. To walk around this fact is not to exorcise it.

Nor is it useful, in my view, to minimize the disaster in store if hydrogen bombs and still more ghastly explosives are actually built. Mr. Lilienthal dismissed the recent warnings of scientists as "high intellectual nonsense" and asked "what good comes from the extravagant and sensational picturing of the horrors of atomic warfare." The answer is very simple. No good comes of it if people simply assume we are goners or if on the other hand they get the idea that with enough H-bombs we can be secure. But if people, facing squarely the hazards Mr. Lilienthal wishes to play down, realize that human survival requires a solution of the political conflict—including the conflict over atomic control—then much good can result from such revelations as were broadcast by the four physicists whom Mr. Lilienthal singled out for criticism.

Indeed good has already come of these and other informed warnings. In this country the pressure for new moves to meet and discuss differences with the Russians is mounting fast and quite obviously having an effect on Administration leaders. Senator McMahon and Senator Tydings, important Democrats both, made their first courageous proposals for peace overtures without any encouragement from White House or State Department. But McMahon's latest suggestion that a "peace crusade" be initiated by the Atlantic Pact Council with concrete proposals to be laid before the Russians at a General Assembly meeting in Moscow was received with at least a polite show of interest in the State Department. And Mr. Truman, while declining to go to Moscow as long as he is President, told his news confer-

ence last week that he would give full cooperation to any effort that might lead toward a settlement. When even Senator Wherry urges an exchange of letters between the President and Mr. Stalin, you cannot say that the reactions to the threat of atomic destruction have all been hopeless or defeatist!

What we are really witnessing is a spreading demand for peace, a popular demand which the politicians have been quick to echo. The people may have as little confidence in Moscow as Mr. Acheson and no idea of how to go about reaching an agreement on the H-bomb or anything else, but they reject as suicidal mania the notion that peace can come out of an atomic race between Russia and ourselves. It would be foolish to think that no similar process is going on in the Soviet Union. There, as here, among leaders as well as the people, the knowledge that a new war will probably destroy organized life, and possibly life itself, must force a reconsideration of aims and policies. The stakes in the political conflict are major ones on both sides, but if none of them can be won even by a "victorious" war, the plain alternative is compromise.

This reasoning may appear to suggest that threat is

a useful instrument to induce conciliation—a proposition we have previously rejected. But there is a difference between the sort of threat implied in the conventional "get-tough" attitude ("We'll knock the daylight out of old Joe if he doesn't climb down") and the threat which emerges from the power of mutual annihilation now in the hands of the two great states. The first inevitably gives rise to resistance and counter-threat; the second, in sane men, leads to a bargain. Senator McMahon has proposed the terms of a possible bargain, and has followed with a suggestion as to how it might be brought about. Other ideas will come out of a broad discussion of ways to reach a *modus vivendi*—today the old phrase must be understood literally. I am sure Mr. Lillenthal welcomes such a discussion as an offset to the "mountainous error that bigger and bigger bombs will make us safer and safer." But I think he should realize that the rising pressure for peace is largely a result of what he has called the "scare-the-dopes" school of thinking. Instead of minimizing the chance of disaster Mr. Lillenthal should give his full effort, now he is a free man, to helping clear out the political booby traps that infest the roads toward a peaceful world.

The Raid on the Gas Fields

BY ROBERT BENDINER

Washington, March 3

THE ghosts of Teapot Dome are stirring uneasily this week. Perhaps they are envious of the way in which today's oil men propose to obtain politely and legally some ten times the swag involved in the gaudiest swindle of the Harding era. The vehicle is S.1498, a bill now before the Senate to exempt so-called independent producers of natural gas from the bothersome rate-fixing intrusions of the Federal Power Commission. Senator Robert Kerr, the Oklahoma oil millionaire who has done an awe-inspiring pressure job for the measure, argues innocently that it merely confirms present law, and he affects to see no reason for concern. But if the bill becomes law—Speaker Rayburn rushed the counterpart Harris bill through the House last year on an off day when more than a fourth of the members were absent—the consequences will be far-reaching. Basing his calculations on the known reserves of natural gas, Senator Murray of Montana figures that in time the revised law would yield the gas and oil companies \$10,000,000,000. The net value of the leased Teapot Dome reserves was fixed at \$1,000,000,000.

Supposedly the Kerr bill is designed to help the small man, the independent producer who sells to the pipe

lines that now transport natural gas to forty states of the union. But who are these little "independents"? There are roughly 2,300 of them in the nation as a whole, with 600 concentrated in a handful of Southwestern states, where 88 per cent of the nation's gas reserves are located. Of these 600, 35 companies alone supply 72 per cent of all the natural gas going into pipe lines. A minority report of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce last year turned up other interesting figures on the growing concentration in this field. In 1947, for example, approximately one-half of all the gas supplied to pipe lines in the five states of heaviest production came from only twelve of these independent producers, "independent" in this connection meaning that they do not themselves own or control the pipe lines that carry their product. "Taking the country as a whole, thirty-three oil companies held in lease or fee five-eighths of the total oil and gas acreage, with more than half . . . in the hands of twenty companies." Among these poor independents are such familiar names as Phillips, Gulf, Shell, Sinclair, and Standard Oil. The committee minority, headed by Representative Crosser of Ohio, concluded reasonably that "in the face of this situation, it is clear that the majority can place no dependence upon free competition among producers to

assure reasonable prices. . . . competition today is between buyers seeking natural-gas supplies from producers rather than between producers seeking a market."

The Kerr bill, considered moderate alongside the Moore-Rizley bill of 1947, would continue the right of the Federal Power Commission to fix rates charged by the pipe line to the distributor at the other end, but much good that would do when the rate base would have to take into account the uncontrolled prices paid out by the line to its source of supply. On the basis of rate boosts now before the commission, experts figure that if the Kerr-Harris bill goes through, field prices of natural gas will triple when present contracts expire. That does not mean three times the price to the consumer, of course, since other costs enter the picture before the gas reaches him, but eventually he may have to face bills at least twice as big as he has been paying, with monopoly profits alone wiping out the present price differential between natural gas and other fuels. Charles H. Rhyne, Washington representative of the National Institute of Municipal Law Officers, thinks "the total increase in dollars paid by consumers will amount to more than \$200,000,000 a year."

Robert Kerr has the reputation of being one of the most persuasive salesmen on Capitol Hill. He must be to have avoided the shocked resentment of his colleagues in this particular campaign. Kerr got his start with the Phillips Petroleum Company, now the largest independent producer of natural gas for interstate sale. With gas expected to go up five cents per 1,000 cubic feet should the Kerr bill become law, the Phillips reserves should be worth \$750,000,000 more than they are at present. What is much more blatant, Kerr's own firm, the Kerr-McGee Oil Producing Company, owns some 74 gas wells and more than 500 oil wells. Rhyne estimates Kerr's ultimate profit on a five-cent increase at \$50,000,000 before taxes.

GIVEN these embarrassing statistics, the Senator had to have some arguments, and they boil down to these: S.1498 seeks to reaffirm past administrative policy of the Federal Power Commission; to clarify the present law, which has been rendered questionable by a decision of the Supreme Court; and to prevent the government from treating natural gas as a public utility when it does not so regard coal, oil, or gasoline.

The small contingent that expects to carry the fight against the Oklahoma millionaire, led by Senators Douglas of Illinois and Myers of Pennsylvania, has heard these arguments before and is ready for them. It is factually correct to say that the commission has in the past interpreted the law as Kerr interprets it, ruling out the independent producers on the ground that the wording of the statute bars its application "to the production or gathering of natural gas." It was not clear

whether this prohibition extended to the *sale* of gas to the pipe lines, but between 1938, when the law was passed, and 1946 field prices were low and stable, and the commission could afford to take an indulgent view. Since then the swiftly rising demand has put holders of large gas reserves in a position to exact monopoly prices, which they have proceeded to do.

In 1947 the commission reaffirmed the exemption of independents making "arm's-length sales," that is, sales in which theoretically no affiliation existed between producer and buyer. But, Douglas points out, the commission has changed considerably since then. Only Commissioner Draper dissented from this rule, known as Order 139, with Commissioner Leland Olds and two others upholding it. But after the commission's detailed investigation in 1948, Olds publicly reversed himself, and Buchanan, a newcomer to that agency, supported Olds and Draper. This, and not the moony writings of his youth, accounted for the fierce Senate fight against confirming Olds for another term, a fight in which Kerr carried the day. One of the commissioners who favors the exemption, incidentally, managed Kerr's campaign for the Senate two years ago.

It may well be true that the present law needs clarification, though the Supreme Court has certainly made no mystery of its own view that the exclusory clause does not apply to sales in interstate commerce:

Unreasonable charges exacted at this stage of the interstate movement become perpetuated . . . by rates charged subsequent purchasers of gas, including the ultimate consumers. It was to avoid such situations that the Natural Gas Act was passed.*

In any event, Senator Douglas takes the position that clarification does not have to pave the way for extortionate profits. On the contrary, he would clarify the law in the direction of protecting the consumer, which was its purpose to begin with.

The third of Kerr's arguments is almost too transparent to require analysis. The difference between natural gas and coal or oil is simply that the buyer at the receiving end of the gas pipe line has no alternative source of supply. Nor is it feasible for the line company itself to pick up its pipes and move to another field if it can't meet the prices of its suppliers. As the Crosser report puts it, "competitive forces are weak and monopoly forces strong, thus government regulation is required for protection of the public."

Senator Kerr is too skilled a politician to rely on these flimsy arguments, and unfortunately he doesn't have to. He can count first and almost automatically on support from all the natural-gas states, the most important of which are Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Kansas, New

* Interstate Natural Gas Company, Inc. v. Federal Power Commission, 331 U. S. 682, 1947.

Mexico, Mississippi, and Arkansas. His next big reserve is among the Senators, of both parties, from Northern states, who are susceptible to pressure from the big oil companies. And beyond these is the large number of Senators whom he has bound to him by some of the slickest horse-trading seen since the days of David Harum. He has gone all out for several key measures in the President's program and has in return garnered promises of support for his private program of boosting gas profits, his own included.

What is worse, Kerr is thought in some quarters to have trapped the President by the same device. Last year Mr. Truman let it be known through his Budget Director that the House bill to exempt the independents was "contrary to my program." But talk of a "trade,"

possibly involving Senate support for a Columbia Valley Authority, is rife in Washington, and Kerr has provided his bill with an amendment designed to save face for the President should he change his mind and sign the measure. The amendment is a toothless provision which would direct the FPC to keep an eye on field prices and propose "remedial action" when necessary, a mild prerogative which it already enjoys.

Big Oil has already driven Leland Olds out of the government. If the President now allows a public utility to score its first major victory over the consumer since 1933, he can forget about the rest of his domestic program. In high-pressure politics, as in blunter forms of blackmail, opponents are bought only on the installment plan—and the instalments never stop.

The Progressives' Long Winter

BY MURRAY KEMPTON

LATE in the Progressive Party convention an unidentified delegate rose during discussion of the farm program and began his remarks by saying, "This party will some day become the majority party in the country." His words were a lonely echo of the heady talk at the party's founding convention at Philadelphia in the summer of 1948. Few Progressives say things like that these days.

There was little in the proceedings of the party's second convention to indicate any confidence on the part of its leaders that it would become a major political force in the predictable future. C. B. Baldwin, national secretary, said for example that the Progressives would enter fifty candidates in next year's Congressional elections, which is barely half their 1948 slate. Yet the Progressive Party is by no means dead, and it certainly has the resources to remain in operation as long as anyone wants it to. More than twelve hundred delegates from thirty-five states braved the zero temperatures of Chicago and the chill of Ashland Auditorium to sit through three days of meetings that would have tried the patience of an early martyr. They were earnest people, for whom the convention was no junket. They lived at the Y. M. C. A. or were housed rent-free by Chicago party members. They represented, Baldwin said, "full-time organizations" in twenty-two states and "live functioning groups" in the others.

In a metaphor nicely fitted to the elements outside Baldwin announced that with this convention "we

strike the tents of our long and isolated winter at Valley Forge." Reviewing that winter, he said that not all the party's efforts had been failures: last fall Progressive Party candidates had polled 20 per cent of the vote in elections in Richmond, Virginia, and Lawrence, Massachusetts. But these were isolated cases. The decline in the party's fortunes which began in the summer of 1948 has apparently continued. The Progressives have lost not merely power but the illusion of power. In Chicago, on the folding chairs of their bleak auditorium, they looked much more like a sect than a major political party. "We have not established enough direct contact with farmers," Baldwin said at one point in his report. "We have set up few offices outside the big cities."

Though the party has never been viewed with anything but antipathy by the national leadership of the A. F. of L. and C. I. O., during the Wallace campaign it had the active aid of the C. I. O. left wing. But Harry Bridges's Longshoremen and the United Electrical Workers, the only two left-wing unions of substance, were not represented at Chicago. Albert Fitzgerald, the U. E.'s president, has disappeared as a Progressive Party national officer and been replaced by Hugh Bryson, president of the tiny C. I. O. Marine Cooks and Stewards Union. This sort of isolation from the main stream has not in the past kept minor parties from exercising an important influence. But one trouble with the Progressives is that they are a minor party which persist in talking like a major party.

The party's domestic platform is an obvious abdication of intellectual responsibility. It is not perceptibly left of the current Truman program, and it is somewhat to the right of the La Follette platform of twenty-six

MURRAY KEMPTON, labor columnist of the *New York Post*, covered the Progressive convention in Chicago, February 24-27.

years ago. Its farm program is the Brannan Plan; its labor policy is Taft-Hartley repeal; its civil-rights program and the President's are identical. The Progressive answer to this criticism is that Truman stole their domestic program in the first place, and that anyway they mean it and the President doesn't.

Creative thinking is apparently not found among Progressives these days. For example, the convention passed a resolution to support the coal strike. It was, quite simply, pure vote-bait for the mine fields. Its perspective did not extend beyond the immediate situation. That coal has become a sick industry, in need of remedies that might even include nationalization, did not seem to occur to these radicals. The resolutions committee also brought in a statement on the status of women that included indorsement of the equal-rights amendment, which has been anathema to many liberals for years. It was withdrawn and rewritten only after a group of women delegates had made violent protests from the floor. Since Progressives are making a special appeal to the unemployed, they might have been expected to come up with some more lavish promise than weekly unemployment insurance averaging \$35; after all, responsible people in Truman's Department of Labor have recommended as much as \$45.

OBVIOUSLY, it was not the responsibility of the convention resolutions committee to produce new ideas on national policy. Its main business was to find a formula that would resolve the smoldering disagreement between the Wallaceites and the party's pro-Communist wing. The job wasn't done in a fashion to give lasting satisfaction to either side. The convention finally adopted a policy statement which said flatly, "We are not apologists for Russia," and parenthetically that the United States and the Soviet Union had both made mistakes in foreign policy. At the instance of non-Communist Progressives like Wallace, O. John Rogge, and former Representative Leo Isacson, the resolutions committee also accepted a resolution which would extend civil rights beyond the ranks of the faithful.

These seem like small concessions only if you forget how much the slightest heresy pains the faithful fellow-traveler, not to mention the orthodox Communist. Many of the same delegates, in 1948, had raucously howled down a proposed resolution which merely said, "It is not our intention to give blanket indorsement to the foreign policy of any nation." Tepid as the language of the new formula is, it admits the possibility of Soviet error, and that is no little thing.

For what it is worth to those who still believe that political unity with the Communists is possible, I will say that the left wing of the Chicago convention showed more flexibility than ever before. Its line was most conspicuously presented by John Abt, the Progressive Party's

general counsel, whose stated intention was to disappoint the harpies of the commercial press gathered to see the party split in two.

The convention rank and file objected stubbornly. An outright revolt against the two paragraphs in the policy statement faintly critical of the Soviet Union was quieted after three hours of debate only when a number of old-line pro-Communists took the floor to say that they were voting for the criticisms "in the interest of unity." The regular pro-Communist view of the actual meaning of these paragraphs was expressed frankly by Leon Straus, chairman of the Bronx County American Labor Party, when he said he thought the Soviet Union had stood consistently for peace: "I personally," he said, "do not think the Soviet Union needs any apologies."

There is a brutal honesty about these people. You may force them for the record to accept the idea of dual guilt in the cold war, but they won't pretend to like it. Just how far the majority of the convention was willing to go in direct criticism of the Soviet Union was shown when Rogge presented the only expression of independent non-Communist thought heard by the convention's business session. When he said that the Progressives "could not bend reason backwards to justify the attitude of the Cominform countries toward Tito," there was heavy silence. Applause broke out a sentence later when he said that the Russian program for atomic control offered a better basis for negotiations than the Baruch plan. Applause interrupted Mr. Rogge's speech fifteen times, and each time it was in response to a criticism of the United States.

The gloom which hung over the convention was felt by both left and right. The pro-Communists were frankly depressed by the concessions they had to make, and almost for the first time complained about the party's conservative and uninspired domestic program. The non-Communists saw that they had lost more ground than they had gained. In 1948 no genuine Wallaceite would discuss the problem of Communist influence in the party. Now the independents talk about it frankly and even cynically; the price of their association with the Communists has been disillusionment.

The non-Communists stay in the party, in most cases, because they have no place to go. The gap between what they say privately and their speeches would make a Tammany politician gasp. That sort of cynicism—especially when it brings only defeats—will not long satisfy honest men. The tragedy is that their disappointment with the Progressives may lead many of them to abandon politics. A man who resisted rejoining the Democrats through 1949 would hardly return to them in 1950.

Some of these thoughts may well have been in Henry Wallace's mind when he left the convention after spending barely an hour on the platform at its opening ses-

sion. His keynote speech was starkly pessimistic, betraying real shock about the hydrogen-bomb race and apparently sincere disillusion with the Soviet Union's foreign policies. His renunciation of an active role as a Progressive—this is admitted even by the few non-Communist commentators who support the party—does not mean that he is getting out of politics completely. It was apparent from his speech that he feels a desperate urgency about ending the armaments war, and he obviously knows that his own party cannot hope to win influence in time to accomplish anything. What hopes for foreign policy Wallace has, judging from his speech, rest on conservatives—the Churchills, the Lippmanns, the Krocks, and the Tydingses. His attitude from now on will be pro-settlement, but hardly pro-Soviet.

The anti-Communist statements in Wallace's speech

have been taken as attempts publicly to clear his skirts. It seems more likely that he believes his party's only real hope is to chart a course somewhere between the policies of the State Department and the Politburo—"the two big brutes of the world" as he called them. But you can't follow that middle course with a party whose secondary leaders sit frozen in their seats when anyone implies that Tito might not be a Gestapo agent after all. Mr. Wallace seems to realize by now that the Communists are undesirable allies not just because they have a bad name with the average voter. He couldn't find people less suited to form the kind of middle-ground party he wants if he asked Louis Johnson to recruit them for him. The Communists are partisans in the cold war, and what Wallace needs now is people who are above that war.

Britain After the Election

BY HOWARD K. SMITH

London, March 1

THE British people have fallen victim to their own superb political virtues. Never did an electorate do its civic duty so calmly and thoughtfully and with such evidence of maturity as in this election. In their speeches and platforms politicians stuck close to facts and earthy issues affecting everyday life. For the first general elections in half a dozen the Tories threw no red herrings into the campaign, produced no Zinoviev letters, no "Gestapo" scares. This was due less to the improved morality of British politicians than to the patently increased maturity of the British public: each party knew that its first false step would offend the intelligence of enough of the people to lose the elections. A sizable team of CBS correspondents, covering the doorsteps of the nation from Edinburgh to Plymouth with portable recording machines, was uniformly impressed with the firmness of ordinary people's opinions and their detailed knowledge of the issues.

The fact I am emphasizing is that the outcome of the vote—an evenly divided nation, with the splinter groups and independent candidates that used to provide a buffer between the big two parties all but annihilated—was the product of such firm and well-considered popular judgment that no future election in foreseeable time is likely to alter the balance substantially in favor of either party. Neither Labor nor the Conservatives are likely to be able to win a workable

majority. Britain seems condemned for a considerable period to unstable rule.

The danger of this situation to the British nation can scarcely be exaggerated. A certain sentimentality about Britain makes it hard for many Americans to believe that Britain could really go down. The concentration of interest on the political campaign in the past few months has obscured the fact that the British economy verges narrowly on disaster. Wherefore, before commenting further on the elections, it is worth while repeating the primary facts of the British situation.

Here are fifty million people, one-third the population of the United States, living on an island not much bigger than a single middle-sized American state, say Wyoming. To sustain industry and life they must import four-fifths of all their raw materials and half their food. To get currency to pay they must sell tremendous quantities of British manufactures in a world where competition is increasingly severe. Since the war they have failed to sell enough in the right places, and have scraped through by means of very large amounts of aid, mainly from America, and depleting their gold reserves far below what Sir Stafford Cripps last year set as the level of national financial safety.

Now, in the legal term of the government just elected, foreign aid is to end. The post-war replacements boom is already ending, and foreign orders are tending to fall off. Germany and Japan, Britain's two chief competitors in heavy-industrial and textile markets, are swiftly reviving and reentering the competition with low-wage costs of production that cannot be easily matched here. Britain faces the early prospect

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of a sharp fall in foreign sales, extensive unemployment in factories lacking foreign raw materials, and a much lowered standard of life due to the coming necessary reduction of food and semi-luxury imports.

Inside Britain this could mean an exacerbation of class frictions that might threaten British democracy. For example, it is not hard to imagine a future Conservative government, hamstrung by a plague of strikes against falling wages and unemployment, having to resort to very strong police methods to prevent its unconstitutional overthrow. As regards Britain's relation to the outside world, it could mean a further radical peeling off of commitments that might throw out of joint what there is of world power balance and threaten what there is of world peace. If Britain is to avoid this apocalyptic progress, it will need as never before a strong government, able to concentrate on the national interest, to take many unpopular decisions, to change course rapidly to meet sudden circumstances—the kind of government which the elections seem to have made impossible.

Labor has won, but with a majority of only nine votes in the House of Commons over the non-Socialist parties—315 to 306, at this counting. It is an impossible majority, and even the Labor newspaper, the *Daily Herald*, confessed the day after the results were in, "It is clear the government cannot long continue with such a slender margin."

If his party is not to be defeated in the House and made to resign, Mr. Attlee must keep all his Members of Parliament within running distance of the House. The day-to-day governing of the country is bound to be impeded, for the executive branch of government in Britain is made up of some seventy Ministers and Junior Ministers who must all be Members of Parliament belonging to the government party. If this large number must be on call to vote in the House, they can hardly pay proper interest to their executive functions in offices from a half-mile to several miles from Westminster. The government cannot send delegations to the United Nations or to Marshall Plan conferences in Paris in adequate numbers or for substantial periods without risking being caught short of votes in the House. Ordinary members can seldom afford to go out to dinner, go to the movies, or even catch cold and stay at home in bed lest their Cabinet be outvoted and ousted in Parliament. Mr. Attlee has thus won responsibility for governing Britain without the power to do so, and it is unlikely that he will want to continue long even if he can keep from being overthrown.

The impression seems to have taken hold abroad that the election has put Mr. Churchill's Conservatives in a strong position. Tory papers in Britain have even demanded that Labor resign and yield up government to Mr. Churchill, in view of his "moral victory" at the

polls. In fact Churchill's position would be no better than Attlee's, and government would be a severe embarrassment to him. If he formed a Cabinet, it could be broken immediately. If he then called new elections, his prospects would not be promising. As was noted above, a new election is not likely to yield a substantially different outcome. If the Conservatives won every possible doubtful voter, they would probably come to power with a majority only about the size of Attlee's now, which is inadequate. This analysis of how the British people would vote in a new election may be wrong, but it is the risk Churchill would have to take, and he must therefore be extremely cautious in his moves—one more paralyzed limb in the British body politic.

In any event there are likely to be new elections before the year is out—if not because Churchill forces Attlee out, then because Attlee will refuse to govern without power to do so properly. Thus the present is to be a period of maneuvering for political points at a moment when Britain needs strong government. Both parties will be seeking a good popular issue on which to break up the present shaky Parliament and go to the polls. This at a time when Britain needs a government that can rise above political tactics.

ONE of the most ominous aspects of the new situation is the tremendous strain it is likely to put on the structure of the Labor Party. If economic crisis descends on Britain in the next two years—and in the circumstances, it is almost certain to—the leaders of Labor are going to be increasingly tempted to end the instability of government by coalescing with the Conservatives to form a "National" government. At present the memory of Ramsay MacDonald's "sell-out" to the Tories in the crisis of 1931 makes this seem impossible. But one can envisage a crisis so severe that present troubles would black out past memories, and the Labor leaders may take the step.

The rise of coalition-mindedness within the next two years is the more conceivable if Mr. Churchill abandons leadership of the Tory Party. His successor would be Anthony Eden—rumored not long ago to be thinking of joining the Labor Party. Eden's Tory second-in-command would be R. A. Butler, who wrote the me-tooist, pro-welfare-state platform of the Conservatives in the recent elections. The difference between the conceptions of these men on the left wing of the Conservative Party and of Messrs. Attlee and Bevin on the right-wing of the Labor Party is minimal, and their coalescence in one Cabinet would be all too easy in a moment of national crisis.

The whole Tory Party would probably accept such a coalition. In an economy still overwhelmingly capitalist, and in a time of crisis when radical changes would be shunned, it would eliminate the danger of

further nationalization of industries. But on the left wing of the Labor Party there are men of elephantine memories and with firm devotion to the fixed doctrines of socialism—a group led by the Welsh firebrand, Aneurin Bevan. It is certain that this group would leave the Labor Party rather than join a coalition which would inevitably bolster the social status quo.

Mr. Bevan could not take a majority of the party with him, but his adherents would be numerous enough to wreck the Labor Party. His popularity with the rank and file has been growing steadily, and for the past three years he has been elected to the party's National Executive with the highest vote of all its members. His young followers are making inroads into the Executive. Two of them—Michael Foot and Tom Driberg—have been elevated to it in the past two years. Among the Labor Ministers the Bevanites are strong and are said to include Sir Stafford Cripps, Harold Wilson, G. R. Strauss, John Strachey, and Emmanuel Shinwell.

Moreover, both the personal mood of Mr. Bevan and that of large portions of the British working class make for fissionable possibilities inside the party. It is no secret that Bevan is irritated by his treatment at the hands of Attlee and Bevin during and since the elections. Though he is the party's best—and Churchill's only peer—as an orator, he was not put on the list of party broadcasters in the campaign. His speaking arrangements did not include London, where one in five British electors live. He was not notified to attend the first emergency meeting of the Labor Cabinet after the elections. It might take very little to start the

Welsh Minister for Health going into political business on his own if the already evident irritation of British workers at Mr. Attlee's "wage freeze" should in the next years reach the same peak as Bevan's own irritation.

Even if these dire political possibilities do not happen—if Mr. Attlee chooses to continue to rule, if he resists the temptation of a coalition, if Bevan remains in harness—there will be troubles aplenty for the Labor Party as a result of the elections. An outstanding one is the fact that after five post-war years of subdued resignation the right in Britain has found itself, has recovered an ebullient confidence. It is not likely to stand by and watch grumblingly while Labor fulfils its pledges and makes private monopolies a public charge. We are likely to see a Labor government hamstrung by subtle, semi-constitutional means of sabotage open to the owners of a nation's economic substance, such as the organized collapse of government bonds on the stock market. If Labor remains true to its Socialist goal it may have to apply strong measures; if it abandons its socialism, then the question of its *raison d'être* arises: it will become in fact the British Liberal Party with no policy to offer and eventually be ground down as was the Liberal Party of the last century. The elections sharpen and hasten the crisis of philosophy which has been developing inside the party for some time past. If the crisis is not resolved firmly, the past five years will not have been the founding first term of British socialism that its adherents have believed them to be but the Golden Age of Labor, after which the deluge.

The Consequences for Europe

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

Paris, February 28

IT WOULD have made all the difference to Western Europe if Labor had been returned with a proper majority. As things are, the confusion and uncertainty of the British political scene will be shared by Western Europe until the next election, or until the new Attlee government demonstrates that it has enough drive to fire the imagination of the British people. Already the capitalist press of the world has united to ascribe the "failure" of British socialism to some sort of "world trend," the idea being that it is, somehow, natural that Adenauer should be allowed to make a complete economic mess of western Germany, that the Demo-Christians should continue to mismanage Italy, that Belgium, under another Demo-Christian regime,

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should have more than a quarter-million unemployed, and that Britain should follow suit. M. Reynaud and the *Figaro* are shaking their heads at the tendency of the Bidault government—some of whose members are still anxious not to quarrel with the Socialists forever—to favor even a slight increase in French wages. The British Labor Party and its leaders are not particularly international-minded; even at Strasbourg last summer many French Socialists complained of the British leaders' insularity. But the very existence of a Socialist government in England is a moral factor of the first magnitude in the countries of Western Europe and a serious restraining influence on those who would like to launch an all-out capitalist offensive.

Most of the European papers seriously misrepresent what happened on February 23. The fact that after Labor had been five years in office its proportion of the vote dropped by only 1.4 per cent is usually ignored,

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and emphasis is laid on "the smashing defeat of socialism." Now all these papers are gleefully looking forward to the next election, which they say "will consecrate Churchill's triumph." The Socialist experiment, we are told, will then be discarded and largely undone, and Britain, like the rest of the non-Communist world, will return to healthy private enterprise.

One of the things which struck many of the French journalists who went over to England for the election was that both sides were exceptionally "courteous and gentlemanly." Superficial observers saw in this "the very quintessence of a sound democratic tradition." But other judges, looking farther beneath the surface, detected a certain defensive and almost apologetic tone on the part of many Labor candidates, especially when it came to defending nationalization, and a reluctance to use the word "Socialist." Would the Labor vote, it is now asked, really have been harmed if the electorate had been told a little more about the tremendous significance, both at home and abroad, of the British Socialist experiment? As it was, many "floating" voters had the impression that it didn't make much difference whether they voted Labor or Conservative. This "gentlemanliness" of the election, as careful French observers saw it, was studiously encouraged by the Tories, who insisted that they were for the welfare state and full employment and were only against further nationalization. In fact, they implied that by voting Tory the British public would get rid of some of the disadvantages of Labor rule, while retaining all its advantages.

Tory tempers were deliberately kept under control, and it was not until the night of February 23 that one realized how much suppressed viciousness there was under the pure democratic mask of Toryism. May I give here a personal experience? Words which I had never heard used during the campaign I heard shouted by female voices on that rainy night in Trafalgar Square. When Mr. Attlee's picture was thrown on the screen, between the announcements of results, one woman screamed hysterically: "Ratface! Ratface! Ratface! Take him away! Take him away!" Then when Mr. Churchill's picture appeared she let out yowls the like of which I had not heard since Nazi days in Germany.

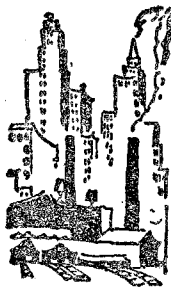
I THINK those French observers are right who believe that the next British election—whenever it is—far from being gentlemanly again, will be one of extreme viciousness. The French Socialists, who unlike the Laborites are gravely handicapped by the rivalry of a powerful Communist Party, have looked to the British party with envy and admiration. They know perfectly well that communism has ceased to have any influence in Britain precisely because the Labor Party is so powerful. England had found a remedy against com-

munist which France, owing to the weakness of the democratic left, has never been able to acquire. But now the French Socialists are deeply worried, not only because a Tory government in Britain, should that be the outcome of the next election, would increase the appeal of the British Communists—a relatively small matter—but because the subsequent offensive against the Communists throughout Western Europe would become an offensive against the democratic left as well.

Although the French Socialists do not presume to give advice to the still powerful Labor Party, many of their spokesmen have what might be called a more scientific approach to socialism than some British Labor leaders, and they have not failed to note two important points: (1) Morgan Phillips's admission that the Labor Party did not take sufficient advantage of its opportunities to "educate the electorate" and make them see the issues more clearly, and (2) the stupendous organizational and financial effort made by the Tories over a long period—not just during the campaign—to win the floating vote, notably in the London suburbs.

Big business, though carefully remaining in the background, has not been idle all these years. *Populaire* as it now recalls, sounded the alarm last spring when it warned that Lord Woolton had set up "a formidable machine, the importance of which our British comrades should not underrate." Moreover, the French have observed that the Tories had the support of the vast majority of the press and that they also, on the whole, made better use of the radio than Labor. Did not the latter's sweet reasonableness lack just that bit of pep which "Nye" Bevan might have supplied? If the French Socialists, in their humble condition, lack *dynamisme*, has not the Labor Party too little of it also? One idea which Labor did not try sufficiently hard to kill was that there was still a "snob value" in voting Tory. In other words, a Socialist *mystique* had not been sufficiently cultivated, or pride in being a Socialist. The failure to impress the rural voter with socialism's prestige was particularly striking.

The rout of the British Communists and their fellow-travelers is of course conveniently attributed by the capitalist press to the "common sense" of the British people. The French Communists, apart from the fact that they have annexed, as it were, the great French revolutionary tradition—which would in any circumstances make the total disappearance of the party unlikely—are, above all, thriving on the raw deal given to the French working class since the war. It is the Fair Shares policy of Labor, far more than any innate British common sense, which has knocked out the Communists. *Humanité* was so embarrassed by the Communist rout that not a single word in explanation of it was to be found in the long dispatch on Saturday from its London correspondent.



EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

BY KEITH HUTCHISON
Yankee "Socialism"

THE American financial press, while censorious enough of "government," "labor," and the "farm bloc," seldom writes harshly of business men or business groups. Hence there was a "man bites dog" flavor about a recent editorial in *Barron's* which solemnly chided the New England Council, a large organization of respectable business men—largely rock-ribbed Republicans, I daresay—for toying with socialism.

It seems that the council, whose purpose is to promote the economic interests of the six Yankee states, is hoping to launch a local steel industry financed—oh, horror!—by a State Authority which by selling tax-exempt bonds would be able to obtain capital at the low rate of $1\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. "This in any man's language," writes *Barron's*, "is subsidy . . . the same kind of subsidy that has already allowed uneconomic and non-competitive power projects to get by." There is, the editorial continues, much to be said both for and against such public agencies as the TVA and the Port of New York Authority. "They are the essence of what is called 'a mixed society'—the society that would make the most of capitalism and socialism, the society of the 'middle way.' But how 'mixed' can a society get without changing its nature? We humbly suggest that there is a point of no return, and that this point can be found when the state moves to the manufacturing field."

The case for a New England steel industry was presented to the Joint Congressional Committee on the Economic Report on January 27 by Dr. Alfred C. Neal, vice-president and director of research of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Speaking on behalf of the New England Council, he explained that the metal-using industries are the most rapidly expanding branch of manufacture in the region, employing some 40 per cent of the working population. The nearest sources of supply for these industries, which consume large tonnages of finished steel, are the Bethlehem plants at Buffalo and Sparrows Point, Baltimore, but they also buy from Midwestern mills. Until the Supreme Court recently ruled out the basing-point system, Bethlehem quotations determined the delivered price of steel to New England, and more distant plants competed by partly or wholly "absorbing" freight differences. Now that this practice has been declared illegal, New England steel fabricators are being asked to pay \$5 to \$12 more than their rivals in the steel-producing areas. Possibly this situation will be ameliorated if and when the present tremendous demand for steel abates and producers of the metal cease to enjoy a sellers' market. But the New England Council, realizing that in the semi-monopolistic steel industry competition will always be very imperfect, is not willing to gamble on that. It believes that unless a dependable local supply of this basic material

can be assured, metal-using industries will begin to desert the Northeastern seaboard. "We've lost textiles," *Barron's* reports a New England banker as saying, "we're losing shoes, but we'll be damned if we'll lose steel fabricating."

The plans of the New England Council call for an integrated mill with a capacity of 1,225,000 tons of ingot steel, equivalent to 840,000 tons of finished sheets and plates, a total very much less than the present consumption of these products in the Yankee states and nearby sections of New York and New Jersey. The plant would be built on the coast—New London, Connecticut, is a frequently mentioned site—and so secure cheap water carriage for coal from West Virginia, via Newport News and Norfolk, and iron ore. The iron ore might be imported from Sweden, Newfoundland, or Spanish Morocco and, in a few years, at a relatively cheap rate from the newly discovered Quebec-Labrador deposits. Limestone can be obtained locally or from New Brunswick, and the New England area produces a surplus of steel scrap. A mill of the size projected would provide employment for 4,000 to 5,000 men and eventually might create indirectly ten times as many new jobs.

To build such an integrated plant would require, it is estimated, about \$240,000,000. Since none of the large steel corporations have shown any inclination to invest such a sum, the New England Council proposes that the state selected for the site of the enterprise should create a Steel Plant Authority which would raise \$160,000,000 by the sale of bonds. The rest, in the form of equity capital, would be subscribed locally and, it is hoped, by an existing steel concern which would undertake the management of the enterprise. The Authority would then build the plant and lease it to a private operating company on terms which would permit amortization of the bonds in twenty-five years.

Dr. Neal claims that, assuming an average rate of operations equivalent to 82 per cent of capacity, the plant would earn an average net return, after payment of all federal and local taxes, of 7.8 per cent on the stockholders' investment. *Barron's* is skeptical about this calculation: it does not believe that a relatively small integrated plant could produce as cheaply as the very large plants already in existence. In any case, it argues, "no existing steel company has been willing to locate in New England on the basis of its own market analysis, and we happen to live in a society where the judgment of business men in these matters should rule."

The New England Council evidently believes that this judgment may be fallible. The major steel corporations may feel they have the New England market safely sewn up and so prefer to concentrate on their present properties, knowing that no purely private venture could hope to raise the capital required for an integrated mill. Moreover, it is questionable whether the economics of a project of this kind can be determined solely by corporate calculations of profit and loss. If there were to be a great shift of industry from New England because of lack of steel, huge amounts of productive and social capital would be lost as plants were closed and towns, perhaps, rendered derelict. Are the risks of such wastage to depend on the judgment of a few dozen steel-company directors? Hard-headed New Englanders are saying "No, and if that be socialism make the most of it!"

DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA

VI. Myths Versus Facts

BY CIRO ALEGRIA

Puerto Rico

IT MAY seem rather late for me to reply to Bernard Mishkin's article, *Good Neighbors—Fact and Fancy*, which appeared in *The Nation* of October 26, but the need to improve relations between the United States and Latin America is as urgent now as it was then. At the root of the problem is the tremendous difference between social, economic, and political conditions in the United States and in the countries to the south. This difference stems from the colonial systems set up in the two parts of the hemisphere. In the north the first settlers owned their own land or became artisans or tradesmen. In the south the conquistadors divided up the land into great fiefs, or *encomiendas*, and the masses who tilled it were practically serfs. They have continued to be exploited in one way or another to the present day. The two colonial regimes also diverged on the plane of human relations. The Spaniards had no racial prejudices and intermarried freely with Indians and Negroes, producing new groups in the population.

The French Revolution and the successful struggle for independence of the Thirteen Colonies roused Spanish America to throw off the colonial yoke, but after a brief exhilarating period of freedom it fell under the sway of personal dictatorships. Alternating periods of tyranny and revolt have continued to be the pattern.

The dictators have frequently been aided if not raised to power by North American investors. President Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy offered the people a little hope, which was heightened by the war, the Atlantic Charter, and the proclamation of the Four Freedoms. But of the good feeling generated during this period little remains except the memory of the great President.

People in the United States, according to Mr. Mishkin, are so under the influence of certain myths that they fail to perceive the true state of affairs.

These myths [he says] permit the northern half of the hemisphere to believe that the southern half is conceived in its own image, motivated by the same forces, and moving in the same direction. They affirm the presence of institutions that do not exist and deny the existence of those that dominate the scene, etc., etc.

I have lived in the United States eight years, and I

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have never found any trace of a belief that the southern half of the hemisphere is conceived in the image of the northern half. It is true, however, that people in the United States seem unwilling to look squarely at the realities in Latin America or to make a genuine effort to establish contact. Their traditional isolationism, which has only recently begun to crumble, their habit of looking at foreign countries from the point of view of a tourist or salesman, their racial prejudices, and what might be called their democratic pride—the belief that democracy is exclusive with certain superior nations—have combined to keep them from even trying to understand the strange countries to the south or from calling on the Latin nations to join in a common effort to further hemispheric solidarity.

Mr. Mishkin continues:

The seldom challenged assumption that the South American states are "nations" is the commonest myth of all. . . . None of these states can be considered nations in the power sense. Neither are they nations in the fundamental sociological sense. They lack the community of interest and homogeneity of purpose associated with the concept of nationhood.

The violent internal struggles of the Latin American nations have apparently deeply impressed Mr. Mishkin. Admittedly, the governments are frequently opposed by the people, but would he expect the people to support their oppressors? Latin Americans cling to the faith that some day they will liberate themselves and be able to form true nations "with community of interest and homogeneity of purpose." Indeed, it is remarkable to find such a profound sense of "nationhood" in countries where there is so much economic inequality and social conflict.

To explain what he calls "the sad state of South American culture" Mr. Mishkin says:

In the absence of communal consciousness the true artist and scientist represent nothing and operate in a void. The first-rate talents are quickly destroyed by hunger and ridicule or lack of imagination. The cultural field is monopolized by amateurs (*aficionados*) who with parochial-school sophistication and talent for imitation paint, sculpt, write history, philosophy, novels, and criticism, sometimes all at once.

The trouble is that the oligarchies which control the various governments also control education and are not interested in raising the cultural level of the masses.

For the writer or scientist or artist two courses are open: he can serve the oligarchy and be rewarded by a salaried post, or he can keep his independence and risk starvation, for there is always the danger that he will fail to win the favor of the multitude, which has had too little instruction to appreciate all works of art.

LATIN AMERICAN culture, however, is far from being in such a sad state as Mr. Mishkin indicated. Two of its representatives are ranked among the classics of the common Spanish heritage—the Mexican dramatist Juan Ruiz de Alarcón and the Peruvian historian Garcilaso de la Vega el Inca. The Venezuelan Andrés Bello and the Colombian Regino Cuervo are considered the best grammarians of the Spanish language. A Nicaraguan poet, Rubén Darío, became famous not only throughout South America but in Madrid and Paris.

But perhaps Mr. Mishkin feels that these figures belong to a remote past. And he may not be acquainted with the contemporary poets César Vallejo and Pablo Neruda, though they are well known in Paris. But did he hear no talk of Gabriela Mistral when she was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1945? And has he never read Alfonso Reyes, one of the leading humanists of America?

In the plastic arts Spanish Americans hold the first place in America and a distinguished place in the world. Painters like Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros—who, incidentally, have been enthusiastically acclaimed by their countrymen—and other less well-known but coming artists in Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia combine Spanish and native painting traditions. Their work is valued not only as an expression of the local culture but as a contribution to world culture. By temperament and tradition the Latin American is creative. The illiterate and hungry peasants, whom one would expect to be brutalized by centuries of oppression, produce music, songs, dances, pottery, and textiles of astonishing originality, gaiety, and beauty. All this is an abundant fount of inspiration for major works of art: consider, for example, what the Brazilian musician Hector Villalobos has done with native melodies. Where did Mr. Mishkin get the idea that “the cultural field is monopolized by amateurs”? Amateurs, or *aficionados*, fill the salons, but they never acquire much fame or money; clever advertising is less successful in deceiving people about mediocre work in Latin America than in many other parts of the world.

We next find Mr. Mishkin saying:

Another view still widely held is that parliamentary democracy is possible in South America. Before their recent setbacks popular movements such as the Betancourt-Gallegos party in Venezuela had taken power by constitutional means. Similar movements were everywhere gaining headway. With more adequate support

from the United States, it is argued, democratic government might have been saved. This argument makes little sense. An attempt to save democracy in South America could have put the United States in the position of the doctor who rushes into a house to discover that the patient is not only not ill but does not live there.

In making his diagnosis I am afraid Mr. Mishkin did not take into account the effect of the famous Estrada doctrine, though he refers to it in his article. The Estrada doctrine's insistence on automatic recognition of any government that came to power—in the name of the people's sacred right of self-determination—placed Latin American democracy in the position of a patient who delivers himself up to an undertaker eagerly waiting to be paid for conducting the funeral.

The reason we have no democracy is that we have not got rid of feudalism. Concentration of ownership of

LOOKING BACKWARD

Seventy-five Years Ago in “The Nation”

WITH the close of the Forty-third Congress the history of the United States will pass out of the region of the civil war. . . . The Forty-third Congress also marks the terminal point in the course of the Republican Party. A party may, indeed, come into power at the next Presidential election, retaining the same name, and made up largely of the same material; but nothing short of the extremest folly and wickedness on the part of the Southern people can revive the Republican Party as we have all known it. Whatever may be its name, its policy and its leaders will pass away, to be classed respectively with things that are no longer needed, and with men that are no longer trusted. . . . The contrast between the party in Congress in 1857 and 1875 is a demonstration of its success and its decline—in the former Congress, a minority, but united and determined, with definite objects and an unmistakable policy before it, represented by the ablest and purest men that constituencies could possibly select, and having behind it the immense moral power of a people who thoroughly approved its actions as being really devoted to the welfare of the country. In the last Congress, a large majority, yet weak and vacillating, divided upon every question of public policy, conscious that the political condition of the country depended upon their action, yet not knowing what to do nor where to go, led by a few men whose private characters were tarnished and whose public lives were simply those of unscrupulous politicians, and, at the end, when the country had emphatically pronounced against them, recklessly pushing through the most objectionable measures as the last expedient of party management.—March 11, 1875.



the land in a few hands inevitably makes the proprietors the masters and the peasants practically slaves. At times the peasants have revolted, never with much success, though they have not always been betrayed by their leaders, as Mr. Mishkin asserts. The case of Emiliano Zapata, the Mexican agrarian leader, whose incorruptible loyalty to his principles brought him to his death, is not unique in the history of peasant revolts.

MR. MISHKIN is completely mistaken when he says that "government by *caudillismo*, or rule from the saddle, remains almost the sole form of rule in South America." He seems to base his conclusion on the history of the Peruvian movement known as Apra. This movement, he says,

... was noted for its conspiratorial and autocratic methods. Its leader, Haya de la Torre, although he had lived for years in Western democracies, is said to have exhibited all the traits of the Creole figure on horseback, the *caudillo*. If that is true, he is not to be blamed. The pattern of political leadership was set, and the chief of Apra had to play the *caudillo* or surrender his political ambitions.

As Mr. Mishkin knows, Haya de la Torre's actions are in no way characteristic of the traditional *caudillo*. Haya de la Torre began his career by promoting the cause of workers' education. His success in that field encouraged him to lead mass demonstrations against the Leguía dictatorship and the church. Exiled to Mexico, he launched Apra (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana), which had two principal goals, the abolition of imperialism and the nationalization of land and industry. When Leguía finally fell, Haya de la Torre returned to Peru but was unable to win an election, possibly—as he has claimed—because of the frauds practiced by his opponents. He was jailed and upon his release displayed his change in orientation by his reorganization of Apra on a "vertical" basis. During the war he supported the democracies. Since then he has swung far to the right, sponsoring repressive legislation, wooing the militarists, and becoming reconciled with the church. Yet Haya de la Torre is a highly intellectual person whose methods are very different from those of the "Creole figure on horseback."

Nor is Perón a typical "man on horseback," though he is a general. Perón began his ascent to power by exploiting the popular resentment against the hereditary Argentine aristocracy, the landowners, and the exporters who made millions during the war. The Radical Party and the Socialists, after starting the nation along the democratic path, proved unable or unwilling to deal with the landowners. Democracy in the Argentine had made undeniable progress, but economic democracy was far from attained. This situation offered Perón his opportunity, and he rallied the *descamisados* to his banner by his demagogic fascist speeches.

What about Laureano Gómez of Colombia? For half a century the Liberal and the Conservative Party in Colombia opposed each other peaceably. The Liberals never carried their desire for reform too far; the Conservatives felt secure. But finally the Conservatives produced a fanatical leader, Gómez, and the Liberals developed a left wing led by Gaitán, who was determined to improve the social and economic condition of the masses. Gaitán was the most popular political leader in Colombia when he was assassinated just as the Bogotá conference opened. Gómez took refuge in Spain. He came back from Madrid to march his followers through the streets, persuade the army, as Franco had done, to support his adventure, and seize power by a coup d'état. Here you have another Latin American dictator who is no *caudillo* on horseback.

These three authoritarian leaders of the continent—Perón, Gómez, and Haya de la Torre, the first two in power, the third in disgrace and hiding in the Colombian embassy in Lima—are directing a movement that is entirely new to Latin America. Their tactics differ superficially in accordance with the special situation in their respective countries, but their guiding principles are the same. The three men are alike in the semi-military organization they have given to their parties, the demagoguery of their programs, their nationalism and anti-communism.

Most of the present dictators in Latin America have adopted fascist methods. They are not at all the type of primitive and despotic *caudillo* who used to rule. The new tyrants have systematized violence; wearing kid gloves themselves, they let armed bands do their work. They are frequently aided by the people, whom they have seduced with promises. At times they don a mask of legalism and pretend a devotion to the national interest.

IF I WERE to go on citing the facts which refute Mr. Mishkin, my article would be interminable. I will only refer now to some of his discouraging conclusions:

South America [he says] is made for exploitation, gets a living from it, precarious though that living may be, and is unprepared for another kind of ex-

istence. . . . It is too late to divide up large concentrations of land among a peasantry that is incapable of developing its potential productiveness.

So Latin America is condemned to be an economic colony, and feudalism with its millions of hungry peasants must be accepted as a permanent condition! Who says that it is too late to divide up large concentrations of land? The Mexican experiment with land reform may not have had all the good results that were expected, but it has not been a failure, and the peasants who work in the *ejidos* are better off than those on the big estates, and are also more valuable factors in production and consumption. Mr. Mishkin does not say why it is too late to divide up the land; no one in Latin America thinks it is too late.

Mr. Mishkin believes that a "White Paper" for Latin America is urgently needed. But he admits that "a permanent solution in South America is beyond the scope of a White Paper; it is also beyond the capacities of the United States government to achieve." At last he offers his own remedy—more imperialism. The trouble in the past, he says, has been too little imperialism, not too much. More imperialism would "break up an anachronistic social system whose continued survival is inimical to the interests of the United States."

I hardly think that a bigger dose of imperialism, even of the modern, improved type favored by Mr. Mishkin, would produce different results from those we have known. Moreover, the areas in which imperialism can function, whatever its purposes, are being restricted. Affairs have reached a stage where the interests of local oligarchies conflict with those of imperialist capital. Mr. Mishkin says: "The possibility must be allowed that coercion may have to be used against those groups with vested interests in the status quo." If this is true, it is because Latin America is the last region in which North American capital can still find investment opportunities. From the point of view of the United States, therefore, Mr. Mishkin's prescription is an excellent one, and the purpose of his whole argument appears to be rather to justify a plan than to propose one.

IN CONCLUSION, I wish to state certain facts, not myths, facts easily available and in no sense my "personal discoveries."

1. Latin Americans consider themselves ready for democracy, by which they mean their own brand of democracy—economic democracy with a strong socialist tinge. If they could have free elections, they point out, few of the present dictatorial governments would remain in power. But they admit that free elections are a remote possibility, and that even if they were held, the governments set up by the people would have little chance of maintaining themselves against the pressure of

the feudal oligarchies in alliance with foreign interests.

The dilemma of the United States is whether to support democratic forces in Latin America, which may or may not be in favor of capitalism, or to continue on good terms with the dictators and fascists whom the Latin American people consider their enemies. If it chooses the first course, the investments of its citizens may be jeopardized. If it chooses the second, the investments are safe, but the good-will of the people of Latin America is lost. Since the importance of this last factor is underestimated by the policy-makers of Washington, the situation is likely to continue unchanged.

2. Latin Americans place little faith in industrialization and expanded foreign investments unless these economic changes are accompanied by political changes. Under the rule of the oligarchies foreign capital is allowed to operate only where it offers no threat to feudalism or the traditional privileges of the ruling classes. As for industrialization, whether it is carried out with foreign or local capital, it must inevitably strike the snag of the people's lack of purchasing power. Latin Americans who cannot afford to buy a pair of shoes outnumber the 70 per cent who cannot read.

3. It has not escaped Latin Americans that the United States, as a bastion of capitalist democracy in a world turning to different ideals and a different system, is in a difficult position, and that its problems are aggravated by its struggle with Russia for the leadership and eventually the domination of the world. People whose interests are not identified with those of the ruling oligarchies are therefore inclined to examine the situation from every angle. They understand that their fate is bound up with the great debate of the times.

4. Public opinion in Latin America at present is not represented by the press, since most newspapers, existing by grace of the government, follow a traditional line. The public, however, has not definitely taken sides; the United States has suffered an almost incredible loss of prestige, but Russia is not openly favored.

Such being the situation, I believe that more than a White Paper or increased capital investment is required to effect a substantial improvement in the relations between the United States and Latin America. A completely new long-range policy must be formulated by Washington. Unfortunately, the conflicting interests involved and the many practical and theoretical objections that will be raised make it doubtful whether Washington will do anything.



Del Vayo—Postscript on Latin America

THE series of articles on Latin America which *The Nation* has been running has aroused great interest among persons who know at first hand how serious are the political, economic, and social problems of the countries of South and Central America. I recently had an opportunity to talk with a distinguished South American who had just arrived in New York. On account of his position I agreed not to give his name. I have set down the gist of our conversation in the form of question and answer:

Q. Do you share my opinion that the average person in this country and even high officials in Washington do not realize what is happening in Latin America?

A. Absolutely. People here regard recent developments in Latin America as a continuation of the colorful coups d'état of past decades, in which a garrison or a colonel rebelled in the evening and by the next morning held the presidential palace, nothing else being changed. What is taking place today is very different and little understood. Latin America is going through two great crises and a revolution. One crisis is profound and permanent: the primitive continent, with its shaky semi-colonial, semi-feudal economy, is slowly changing under continuing pressures and dislocations. The other is recent and acute: as the result of two world wars the landowners and a nascent industrial oligarchy have acquired fabulous wealth, while the masses, victimized by speculation and inflation, are poorer than ever.

Q. And from these changes the revolution is emerging?

A. Exactly. Liberal and democratic politicians of the old school have not realized the immense social unrest caused by the appalling inequalities between an offensively ostentatious moneyed class and the people. These politicians have slept through the rumblings of the earthquake, awaking now and then to make rhetorical speeches about civil liberties and the rights of man, while hunger and economic injustice were setting the scene for upheaval. In many countries their slumber was broken by the generals and *caudillos* who perceived the state of affairs and hastened to exploit the people's discontent to their own advantage.

Q. Where and when would you say this new revolutionary process began?

A. I witnessed its beginning in Argentina in 1930. After a period of democracy-as-usual, of which the Argentines used to boast, the army suddenly erupted into national politics, and the era of military despotisms started. The army found collaborators among politicians who formerly represented the democratic tradition. The old parties missed the opportunity to unite in support of the candidacy of a genuine anti-militarist, one of South America's great modern statesmen, Dr. Lisandro de la Torre. He was defeated by a general. Afterward we had the eternal spectacle—a divided left, a united reaction. Perón was the logical conclusion of fourteen years of democratic disunion and myopia.

Q. And Perón has had plenty of imitators!

A. Many. In Venezuela. In Peru. In Bolivia. Most re-

cently in Colombia. Colombian liberals, proud of their country's democratic tradition, complain today that they were prevented by violence and fraud from participating in the last election. What they will not admit is that Laureano Gómez became Colombia's President-elect because they had neither the vision nor the courage to liquidate the fascist menace in time. They did not even act when the people beseeched them to save the country from Gómez and his *camarilla* during the bloody riots of April, 1948.

Q. Of course that was their big chance.

A. Absolutely. I was in Bogotá myself, attending the Ninth Inter-American Conference. The people thronged the streets demanding action. They were determined to give battle to the fascists. But their leaders, instead of placing themselves at the head of the insurgents, were in the palace bolstering up the regime, having accepted the idiotic official story attributing the revolt to foreign agitators.

Q. How do you see future developments?

A. The anti-feudal, anti-imperialist revolution has been checked, but no human force can stop it in the long run. You yourself have written that one cannot go against the course of history. Well, history is imposing a profound change on Latin America. The demand for a higher standard of living, for a more equitable distribution of wealth, is being distorted now by demagogues and dictators posing as friends of the *descamisados* in the style of Perón, raising the revolutionary banner only to betray it. But the people are already beginning to discover the trick. "We have been fooled for three years," the very Argentine workers who had raised Perón to power said recently during one of their violent strikes. The people will finally make their revolution. They will fight it with the aid of liberals and democrats if we have learned our lesson, or without us if necessary.

Q. What kind of action would you suggest for the Latin American liberals?

A. The democratic political leaders, some of whom are opposing the dictators with great personal courage, must take note of the deeper currents of the revolution before it escapes from their hands. They should rejuvenate their organizations and their programs, and form a solid anti-fascist front of all the popular parties, without exception; also they must cease to be an appendage of a Pan-Americanism "made in Washington" and work for an independent and democratic Latin America, master of its fate. The struggle will be one episode in the great colonial revolution which is gathering force throughout the world. This movement is not germinating in the academies, or in newspaper offices, or in barracks, or in ministries; it is coming out of labor unions, country villages, groups of white-collar workers and repressed intellectuals. In such centers of genuine revolutionary action the people are awaiting leaders. The awakening of the Asian masses has been the outstanding development of the first half of the twentieth century. The awakening of Latin America may be the historic event of the second half.

BOOKS and the ARTS

PRIMARY

Few originals but mighty
Waking in the prime
—Pull and release, light, sound, growth, color—
Broke through space and time.

Who but God could have imagined
Cineraria blue,
Or seen scarlet in not-scarlet,
Underived and new?

He alone could call from darkness
Yellow yet unhinted
Where it lay a dreaming splendor
Of the mind, unminted.

Green was easy, given yellow,
One made out of two.
But these tunneled through pit blackness:
Scarlet; yellow; blue.

ABBIE HUSTON EVANS

The Mark of Cain

THE WALL. By John Hersey. Alfred A. Knopf. \$4.

W. H. AUDEN, discussing the crisis of modern man, compared it to the situation of Jews, and declared now we are all Jews. True enough. Still, one might add: but with a difference. In the record of Nazi atrocities the Jews stand out as a special case—six million innocent dead! As an affirmation of this latter statement John Hersey's novel, "The Wall," is strong, bitter testimony.

"The Wall," probably Hersey's most ambitious book, describes the tragic fate of Jewry in Hitler-occupied Poland. It is the story of the "growth in spirit" of a group of friends, based on the "Levinson archive," which according to the Editor's Prologue was uncovered in the ruins of the Warsaw ghetto after the end of the war. In a richly detailed account of daily life in the ghetto Hersey portrays every political and social type in Jewish life, recording their selfless courage and their moments of vacillation, watching them as they grow steeled to dangers and conflicts and gain in stature as human beings in proportion to the dangers and conflicts.

Hersey describes this in an episode in which the underground fighters, faced with annihilation, decide rather to take their own lives than "fall into their hands." A fight breaks out in the damp cave between two underground heroes, Ketzl and Ganzener, because "Ketzl had three vials of cyanide and Ganzener had wanted one."

Noach Levinson, the "archivist" in "The Wall," wonders at one point whether a non-Jewish historian on discovering his material might not comment that his is a biased, emotional account of Nazi atrocities. He need not have had any fears. Hersey, speaking through the archivist, makes the most moving plea: "My breast is filled with emotion. I write now with tears in my eyes. I am moved because of the loneliness of this fighting figure in the ghetto. He stands alone. What has the conscience of the world ever done for him? Nothing. What will it ever do for him? Nothing. Why should I not be moved. . . ." This is merely the barest suggestion of the warmth and sympathy with which Hersey approaches "Levinson's archive."

We are told that Hersey, while serving as a correspondent in Russia, visited Poland and saw the ruined War-

saw ghetto, the Lodz ghetto, and many concentration camps, where it is said to have occurred to him to write "The Wall." It is doubtful, however, whether these visits by themselves could have resulted in a work of such dimension. The roots of "The Wall" go deeper than that; the author appears to have done an enormous amount of research into documentary literature written by survivors of the ghettos and the concentration camps. One can only wonder, with appreciation, at the author's patience in studying the vast evidence on the Nazis' unprecedented practice of "scientific" brutalities. Like the archivist, Hersey too "buttonholes the couriers for some detail, and in the evenings moves around to various bunkers to fill out sketches with data from the fighters themselves."

The substance of "The Wall" is history, and to anyone familiar with the great number of documentary records compiled by the survivors of the ghettos and the concentration camps, it is accurate history. Noach Levinson, the archivist, might well have been Emanuel Ringelbloom, a Yiddish historian who with his wife and ten-year-old child was killed by the Nazis on the ruins of the Warsaw ghetto. Ringelbloom, idolized by the ghetto fighters for his self-sacrifice and heroism, worked feverishly until the last possible moment, gathering information, preparing memoranda, writing reports. Justly described as a martyr, he had the opportunity in 1944 to leave Warsaw but insisted on staying in order to be able to record the history of the Jewish underground fighters.

There are, as a matter of fact, countless records from which one could easily reconstruct John Hersey's prototypes. In Argentina alone the Federation of Polish Jews has published, in Yiddish, almost fifty volumes of literature on this theme, in which the diary form is widely used; and similar books have appeared in the United States, France, and Poland. For example, Jonas Turkow, one of the underground fighters in the Warsaw ghetto, writes in the introduction to his book "This Is the

Way It Was: The Ruin of the Warsaw Ghetto": "My portraits are based on authentic documents and on the diary I kept while in the ghetto. . . . This I succeeded in burying in a little garden on Mila Street a month before the uprising."

But if the diary form was the most expedient for the Jewish underground fighters, Hersey, who has used both the material and the form of their records, is handicapped in creating a genuine work of the imagination. It is true that we may still be too close to events in Hitler's Europe to view them with real perspective, though there have, of course, been important works of art based on historical developments close to the author. Malraux's "Man's Fate" and Silone's "Bread and Wine" are two such novels. Both Malraux in "Man's Fate," based on the history of the Chinese Revolution, which he knew thoroughly, and Silone in "Bread and Wine," the story of the struggle of the Italian anti-fascists, in which the author fought actively, managed to throw off the burden of historical facts and give free rein to the imagination, thus

transcending the history of which they wrote.

"The Wall," though more than a deeply humane and deeply felt historical document, nevertheless remains only on one level of tragedy, failing to gather momentum as a novel. The fragmented diary entries break the rhythm and the mood; where, in rare instances, they run to two or three pages, the tragic events move more swiftly and more naturally and are charged with a tension suitable to the theme.

The truly great creative writer is not and need not be a prophet, but certainly some men's work, rising as all art does, not out of a vacuum, but out of man's experience, may be prophetic. "The Wall," with its underground people, brings to mind a short story by Franz Kafka, *The Burrow*, which appeared after the end of the First World War. There Kafka's hero says, "I have completed the construction of my burrow and it seems to be successful. . . . Not quite in the center of the burrow, carefully chosen to serve as a refuge in case of extreme danger from siege, if not from immediate pursuit, lies the chief cell." Since we speak nowadays of the underground as the "normal" condition of man, what might have seemed in Kafka's time abstract, or at most symbolic, now appears a prophecy. It is such symbolic insight that John Hersey's novel lacks, though "The Wall" remains a great historical document. It unmistakably burns the mark of Cain on man's conscience.

ELIEZER GREENBERG

Search for Hope

AN ESSAY FOR OUR TIMES. By H. Stuart Hughes. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.75.

MR. HUGHES'S purpose in this essay is to throw light upon our time by applying Spengler's and Toynbee's cyclical interpretations of history to the contemporary situation. In this he hardly succeeds, but his book is nevertheless rewarding, for he is a thoughtful and perceptive historical scholar who looks at the contemporary scene with open eyes and few illusions.

The questions prompted by Spengler and Toynbee are whether our Western civilization is doomed, whether Russia represents a new civilization first gen-

erated by the "internal proletariat" of the West and finally adopted by the "external proletariat," and whether Toynbee's vision of a "universal state" which overcomes the anarchy of a disintegrating civilization offers us hope that we may postpone if not avert our doom.

The difficulty with such questions is that the cyclical interpretation of history which prompts them has only limited validity. History may repeat itself, but there are always new elements in the recurrences. The cyclical interpretation has the merit of calling attention to significant analogies between past and present but the demerit of obscuring the novel factors. Thus when Mr. Hughes seeks to discover analogies between the universal state by which Rome avoided its downfall for centuries and our own situation, the reader is aware of more differences than similarities between the Roman situation and ours. After Carthage, Rome faced many enemies but not a single all-powerful one. Our world, on the other hand, is divided between two great centers of power. We can learn little from the Roman analogy, not even whether our "universal state" would have to be an exclusive Western federation or would have to include Russia also.

Mr. Hughes is rightly convinced that there is no immediate escape from the present situation of uneasy peace and cold war. He rejects either appeasement or preventive war as an alternative and seeks to reconcile our generation to the fate of living in a continual "atmosphere of impending catastrophe."

This is a sobering and persuasive realism. But Mr. Hughes departs from realism in trying to make our historical tension more tolerable by striving "for a broad appreciation of the humanistic goals which unite and transcend competing ideologies." He makes some penetrating criticisms of our excessive libertarianism, and they have particular point coming from the grandson of a great Republican statesman, Charles Evans Hughes. It would be helpful if our civilization were more conscious of its internal weaknesses, but it is not likely that they will be corrected by considering the virtues, if any, of our foes. What is good in the Russian civilization, as for instance its origi-

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nal passion for justice, is embodied in the Western tradition also, and informs the life of many of our allies. We are more likely to appropriate it from our allies than from our foes. A cold war does not dispose nations to exchange their spiritual treasures. Rather it tempts them to accentuate each other's vices. World revolutions cannot make their moral treasures available to the world until after they have run their course as political-military threats to the peace of the world. We could not therefore learn much from the Russians even if they had something to teach us.

But have they anything? Those who try desperately to transcend the ideological conflict end up by emphasizing the virtues of the original Marxist dream and obscuring the horrible realities of the police state. Even Mr. Hughes has come to the dubious conclusion "that the shared work and enjoyment" of Russia's collective enterprise is regarded by a majority of Soviet citizens "as a satisfactory fulfilment of their own inner needs." How does he know?

Our moral situation is, in short, even more doleful than Mr. Hughes's measures. It is not, for that reason, hopeless. But the hope of finding a vantage point of moral transcendence over the conflicting ideologies is not a genuine option. Nor will the virulence of the Russian totalitarianism be overcome by an infusion of our virtues. Communists will continue to believe what they now believe; even as Moslems now believe what they believed when they brought fire and sword to Europe. If Moslems are no longer dangerous, it is because they no longer believe in their ability to conquer the world by the sword of Allah. There is more hope in that analogy than in most of the historical analogies offered us.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

"The Democratical State"

THE RELUCTANT REBELS. By Lynn Montross. Harper and Brothers. \$5.

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of tun-bellied marplots, bent on overthrowing the Republic.

The majority of our historians have adopted this dim view of Congressional standards, and generations of Americans have been taught that after the first two brilliant sessions of '74 and '75 and the signing of the Declaration, the Continental Congress, with its best men withdrawing to other fields of patriotic activity, degenerated to the point of anarchy, from which the Republic was saved only by adoption of the Constitution.

Lynn Montross, novelist, short-story writer, and former newspaperman, whose "War Through the Ages" was a notable contribution to military lore, strikes a hefty blow in behalf of the Continental Congress in this eminently readable story of the doings of that body from 1774 to 1789. After the victory of the radicals had reached its climax with the Declaration, the fifty-odd delegates settled down to the back-breaking, nerve-racking, job of improvising an army and navy, a State Department, and, most important of all perhaps, a Treasury with which to combat the power of the strongest empire in the world. These amateur politicians and self-made outlaws, whose only experience in government had been as members of provincial assemblies, worked, almost literally, with a noose around their collective necks. They had to deal with proud and contentious men not yet accustomed to the idea even of confederation, much less continental unity. They had to drive thirteen provinces, jealous of their sovereignties, together as a working team and explore the most elementary of the dynamic forces behind this new thing under the sun, "the Democratical State." Mr.

Montross quotes the shrewd comment of George Washington on the seeming slowness of Congress to reflect the popular opinion of the times. "Democratical States," said the General, "must always *feel* before they can see: it is this which makes their governments slow—but the people will be right at last."

You come away from Mr. Montross's readable book with a vast respect for the hard-working men who labored mightily in what the author calls "a laboratory of administration" for fifteen crowded years. The author has made a much-needed correction of the popular estimate of our first Congress. We can agree with him when he says:

Worship or reverence would be a very dull tribute to pay to men so vital, so brilliant, so skeptical, and, on occasion, so unscrupulous. And only a fool would try to "debunk" them. They were above all men who had the feel of human clay between their fingers.

MCALISTER COLEMAN

Verse Chronicle

ALL the books, this time, come from small or specializing publishing firms. To begin with, from the Grove Press a bargain: paper-bound, neat-looking, selling for \$1.25, "The Verse in English of Richard Crashaw" (the author also wrote Latin). "Then, Sixteen thirteen to two score and nine was Crashaw's niche, that honey-lipped divine." His mellifluous numbers were outmoded by the time of Pope, whose criticism of him, quoted in the present edition, seems exactly right, no matter what the antipathy of fashion. Yet Crashaw's work, for all its far-fetched and farther pushed conceits, for all its different kind of sensitivity, has a good deal of interest, particularly so in its manipulation of Pindaric measures. The music lies in the stanza more than the line; however obsolete the theme, or of scholastic fascination only, the rhythms break, shift, move, stretch, draw out, with all kinds of subtle and curious tensions. Nowhere in the book is there any indication who the editors are; this seems a pity, for they write very well.

Marshall Schacht's book, "Fingerboard" (Twayne, \$2.25), won the

award of that house in its first first-book contest, an advance of \$100 against royalties. The poems are introduced in an essay of careful and considered approval by F. O. Matthiessen. Comfortable is the word for this kind of poetry; it makes no undue demand on the reader, and the demands it has made on the writer, in living its preparation, are nowhere ostentatiously flaunted or embarrassingly advertised. At his worst, Mr. Schacht shades off into the second-best of Robert P. T. Coffin—for whose potential best, believe it or not, I have considerable admiration. Mysticism can go with serenity but not with complacency, and folksiness can so easily become too easy. In his rhythms and stanza-patterns Mr. Schacht displays a modest variety, without being very adventurous or imaginative; in his context of mainly true rhymes his occasional excursions into assonances disturb me a little, seeming more like gaffes than effects,—*words, bird; grave, saved; metaphor, before; grass, passed; this, Yes* (placed, as it is, as the final couplet of a serious poem, this gives a comic-dialect effect which is not the poem's intention), *star, dark; above all, parlor, mallow*—or is this a New Englandism?

As for his merits: Mr. Schacht does not verbalize, does not show off. "Inconsiderate authors," Pope wrote, "would rather be admir'd than understood. This ambition of surprising a reader, is the true natural cause of all fustian, or bombast in poetry." By this ambition Mr. Schacht is not tempted, or by its opposite, which covets admiration for being all too easily understood. No; he is what he is, modest, sensitive, decent—one has the impression of character forming the lines. He has more than a knack, a talent, for building a poem from an unobtrusive beginning to a dramatic close—Chalk Mark on a Wall, Fledglings, Seldom the Trees, Bridal Song, To a Yoke of Oxen suffice for example. In the second of his Two Reviews (I doubt that he intended it so to apply) Mr. Schacht has written the criticism of his own book. It is, at its best, "by something fierce and strict the rarest produce of a man, his honest art." Next time, I hope, he will exercise the strictness a little more severely, and let more of the fierceness come blazing through.

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Twayne, priced at \$2, is Dilys Bennett Laing's "Walk Through Two Landscapes." Her sensuous, even when fantastic, landscape is, it seems to me, more interesting than her philosophic, however moral. These are not exactly what she means by the two landscapes described in her title poem; I do not think she realizes, in that poem, exactly what she does mean, but she seems to me to be telling the truth there when she says she is uneasy in her abstract world. The outright humor and wit of Victorian Seraglio and the ironic gaiety in Ballad of the Young Dog Fox produce, in my opinion, more successful poetry than is found in Not One Atoll, the Phi Beta Kappa ode delivered at Tufts College in 1946. All humor abandon, ye who enter here, calls the voice of the New Apocalypse; it is a pity, no doubt, but we can hardly be redeemed, these days, by earnestness alone. Lutesong for Young Angels has it "All's good that's gay"—heresy, maybe, but that's more like it.

From Denver Alan Swallow sends "The White Bird" by Ann Stanford (\$2.50). This book contains selections, also, from an earlier, out-of-print collection, "In Narrow Bound." It is dedicated to Janet and Yvor Winters; the impression of this master is so definitely incisive that one does not need to turn the pages to be sure one will come across short poems, with not more than two or three beats to the line, with a nicely modulated *a-b-b-a* rhyme-scheme, and every syllable firmly struck. The trouble with this emphasis on precision is that its inevitability, in a curious way, reduces the statement of the poem to a secondary level of importance; the last line of Arion, for example, might just as well end "Arion's music not yet lost," as the way it does; *And* could replace *Nor* as the final conjunction in An Anniversary, and the total effect be just as valid. It would be an interesting experiment if one of Mr. Winters's disciples could be persuaded to revolt against his instruction, still keeping its discipline deep in the unconscious, and on the surface flouting every one of its canons. Miss Stanford does fine work, more interesting when she begins to risk mistakes and strike out more boldly into realms of more richness, romance, and sensuous rhythm.

Finally we have an anthology, "Mod-

ern Greek Poetry," translated and edited by Rae Dalven. (Gaer Associates, \$3.50). This is a comprehensive volume, with an interesting introductory essay by the editor, narrating the struggle of the Greek people for the use of the demotic vernacular as a medium of instruction as well as of life and art, with specimens of early folk song and a selection from the seventeenth-century masterpiece Erotokritos, and with samples of modern poetry, from Rhigas Pheraios (1751-98) to Odysseus Elytis (1912-19—). The translations suffice to show that among the forty-four authors represented there are a good many poets, and that in spite of dictatorships and occupations there have been great vitality and even considerable publication. The work of C. P. Cavafy, about whom E. M. Forster has written in Pharos and Pharillon, is of particular interest. I wonder a little that Demetrius Capetanakis is not represented; and alas! that rhetoric is not the peculiar possession of our enemies.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

The Story of Law

THE LAW. By René A. Wormser. Simon and Schuster. \$5.

MR. WORMSER tells us that he intended this to be a book which would give laymen some idea of the origin and development of our law, of the great personalities who have helped shape it, and of some of its past and present problems. Under any process of selection of the basic materials, he set himself an imposing task. His effort to suggest the effect upon our legal system of the Hebrew, Greek, Roman, and Germanic cultures made it a monumental one. When in addition he undertook to include thumbnail sketches not only of jurists from Moses to Holmes but of philosophers from Socrates to Voltaire and of political figures from Charlemagne to Franklin Roosevelt, his project became staggering. One wonders if Mr. Wormser would not have been wiser to accept the dictum of Roscoe Pound, of whom he writes with appreciation, that "for all but academic purposes, the history of English law begins in the thirteenth century."

It was inevitable that so ambitious a work should, despite its nearly six

hundred pages, suffer severely from over-compression. Its illustrative statements as to what the law now is will in some cases be challenged, as will some of the author's generalizations. To take a single example which has been noticed elsewhere, the author gives further circulation to the popular misconception that on the European continent a person accused of crime is presumed to be guilty until he is proved innocent. With the exception, perhaps,

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of Soviet Russia this is a very questionable assertion.

The laymen for whom Mr. Wormser wrote will probably not be much troubled by such details. As for the lawyers, they will, I suspect, continue to be faithful to Gray, Pound, and Cardozo for authoritative writing in this field. But Mr. Wormser has produced an interesting book. Its style is popular, and the anecdotes and illustrations with which the author relieves his text add to its readability if they do not always greatly advance the march of Mr. Wormser's history. Many readers will find the most interesting as well as the best-documented part of Mr. Wormser's book his discussion of the strains and dislocations to which international law as applied to war and its aftermath have been subjected by the events which accompanied and have followed the recent war. Not a few will share the author's apprehension as to the ultimate effect of the war-crimes trials and will join in his approval of the solemn words of the late Justices Murphy and Rutledge on the lack of control of the will of the military indicated by the decisions of the Supreme Court in the Japanese cases.

The forebodings which Mr. Wormser emphasizes are but slightly calmed by the very restrained approval which he gives to the efforts of the United Nations. Mr. Wormser appears to be a

"World Government" advocate. In this as in his strictures upon certain features of the New Deal he is of course in a considerable company. But his opinions on these matters seem scarcely germane to his desire to inform the layman about "the law."

LARUE BROWN

Dream and Action

DREAMERS OF DREAMS. By Holbrook Jackson. Farrar, Straus and Company. \$3.50.

THIS IS a study of six nineteenth-century writers—Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris in England; Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman in America—as personalities and prophets. Jackson's crisp, aphoristic style points up a shrewd sense of the connections between an individual's temperament and his "ideology," so that on the whole these essays have a certain life and sharpness as psychological portraits. The essay on Thoreau is perhaps the best; at least with its emphasis on Thoreau's aesthetic perceptions it is the most appreciative. As a study of social hopes and prophecies, however, the book is too often simply a rather mechanical juxtaposing of "dream" and actuality that does not take into account the indirect ways in which a "dreamer's" ideals affect other men's actions. Likewise one too often feels the need of amplifica-

tion, at least in the American group, of statements about social background—that Whitman, for instance, was more typically American than Abraham Lincoln, or that Emerson was trying to adjust himself to "a colonial society in decadence." HOWARD DOUGHTY, JR.

Drama

JOSEPH
WOOD
KRUTCH

I AM afraid that Sidney Kingsley started an annoying trend when he suggested in advance that the police station in his "Detective Story" might be regarded as a microcosm and his self-righteous detective as a symbol of the dictator. Arthur Laurents, author of "The Bird Cage" (Coronet Theater), follows suit with the hint that his night club and its crooked proprietor are the same thing. Obviously this useful device for turning any melodrama into a symbolic play is universally applicable, and the truth is that "The Bird Cage" is about as symbolical as "Nellie the Beautiful Cloak Model."

"Detective Story" was at least excellent documentary, full of convincing local color. Everything about "The Bird Cage" is, on the contrary, exceedingly stale. Mr. Kingsley's play showed the results of his preliminary research in his milieu, and though it is quite possible that the author of the present work has visited a lot of night clubs there was no reason why he should have done so. Nearly everything in his play might just as well have been taken from the many "back-stage" melodramas which followed the success of "Broadway" a generation ago. Both his tough show girl and his lily-out-of-a-dunghill show girl are standard types. So too is the "sensitive" pianist and the spectacularly unscrupulous boss. Occasionally, to be sure, one gets the impression that the attempt has been to imitate the tough detective-story manner of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler rather than "Broadway," but the whodunits do this sort of thing better, and, besides, "The Bird Cage" usually lapses quickly into the more obviously sentimental manner.

Everyone concerned with putting the show on seems to have been determined to make more out of it than could be

THE MYTH OF CATHOLIC SCHOLARSHIP THE ABSURDITIES, FALSEHOODS AND DISTORTIONS OF THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA

Joseph McCabe simply had to write this 30,000-word book after the success of his devastating book exposing the lies and fallacies of the Britannica. For years we've been compelled to listen to the claims of "Catholic Scholars" without being given the material with which to judge their qualifications. This is solved, at last, by the one man best able to do the job—Joseph McCabe, the keenest writer on Catholicism in the world. In this invaluable work of enlightened criticism, McCabe sails into the major lies, with side excursions into the odds and ends of mendacity. Naturally, after devoting some chapters to Catholic scholars in general McCabe devotes himself to the Catholic Encyclopedia, which he takes apart and examines with ruthless candor. He proves by actual references that the encyclopedia contains thousands of statements which any scholar must pronounce lies. From end to end, McCabe shows, it suppresses, manipulates, and distorts established facts in the interest of the Roman Catholic Church. McCabe says in his introduction that of the score of encyclopedias (American, British, French, Italian, Spanish, German, Protestant, Jewish, Economic, etc.), that he consults in the course of his work no other has the slightest approach to the Catholic Encyclopedia in the art of duping its readers. Eighty percent of the contents are not of the faintest interest to the modern. The remaining 20 percent is stiff with the lying and trickery of Catholic propaganda. In this new volume McCabe gives enough to convince the readers that this encyclopedia is dangerous because it reeks with lies. McCabe here does culture and Freethought a tremendous service. This is surely his most important, significant and effective work. This new book belongs in your library. Get a copy today. The price of McCabe's "The Myth of Catholic Scholarship" is 75¢, prepaid. Mail orders to:

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made. There is an elaborate and no doubt expensive multiple set by Boris Aronson, with the back room of the club at the stage level, from which a steep flight of iron steps leads up to the monster's den high above the audience's heads. Melvyn Douglas heads the cast and probably does as much as anyone could do to make convincing the villain who hides under a hearty, hail-fellow exterior a lust for power which makes it possible for him to doublecross his partner, break the sensitive pianist's hand, and perform other exploits worthy of the deepest-dyed villains. The pure show girl is played by Eleanor Lynn (whom many of us remember as the young girl in "Rocket to the Moon"); the neurotic partner by Sanford Meisner; and the boss's social-register wife by Maureen Stapleton, who presents her alcoholic hysteria so well, or at least so annoyingly, that the spectator finds himself making certain allowances for the husband. Harold Clurman directs with almost too much determination to make the whole thing mean something.

Perhaps, indeed, it is this last fact which is chiefly responsible for turning what would otherwise have been merely a tawdry melodrama into something definitely irritating. He has gathered together a cast which includes several of the old Group Theater crowd and tried to transform the banal text into a typical Group Theater play. At their best these plays were very good indeed. At their worst they aimed at a sort of hysterical intensity that slipped easily into mere whining. And that is what happens at the big moments of "The Bird Cage." What was intended was obviously a sort of age-of-anxiety tenseness; what one gets is only pretentious shrillness.

CONTRIBUTORS

ABBIE HUSTON EVANS has published two volumes of poems, "Bright North" and "Outcrop."

ELIEZER GREENBERG has published five books of poetry and criticism in Yiddish and is coeditor of the Yiddish literary quarterly *Getsehn (Tents)*.

LARUE BROWN, practices law in Boston.

Art

WELDON
KEES

THERE are certain individuals who are born for one particular moment or activity—the actor with his one good role, the one-poem poet, the one-novel author, the chemist who has happened upon one splendid and revered weapon or panacea, the vaudevillian with his lone routine that every circuit knows by heart. Francis Picabia, whose work is on view at the Pinacotheca (through March 31), takes his place in this company with ease and authority. Picabia seems to have existed solely for the busy and enthusiastic part he played in the birth and death of Dadaism, and the end of the Dada period appears to have left him with nowhere to go and not much of anything to do.

Convinced that the world was imbecilic and absurd, the Dadaists, with Picabia as one of their founding fathers, systematized a method of ridicule with which they hoped to destroy all values and identities. Art and literature were dumped into the same wastebasket to which all other categories were consigned; but, with perfect illogicality, the Dadaists continued to cling to painting and writing as weapons against themselves. "Those who refuse to see in the Dada movement anything but a Parisian scandal characterized by violence and buffoonery," Marcel Ray-

mond has written, "will never understand the intense moral crisis of the 1920's and the current of anarchistic individualism, the refusal to be useful, that upset so many traditional slogans and age-old beliefs." Perhaps. But it was in other quarters altogether that the "intense moral crisis" was being not only experienced but comprehended—by talents committed not only to upsetting traditional slogans but to salvaging and creating: Proust, Mann, Eliot, Pound, Valéry, Joyce (a non-Dadaist who deeply penetrated the Dada spirit), Picasso, Braque, Miró.

Nothing has dated more than the run of Dadaist products; and nothing illustrates more effectively the irrelevance and topicality of works that owe their being alone to a "spirit of revolt." (The poetry of Eluard is another matter.) The "totally original," the last word, has a way of fading out like an imperfectly fixed snapshot. The Dadaists, to a great extent, produced period pieces, equivalents of the whatnot, the antimacassar, and the coiffures of Theda Bara. On the other hand, the early Cubist masterpieces of Braque and Picasso have taken on greater stature through the passage of time itself. Even the Dada jokes are far from mirth-provoking at this distance; they seem even weaker than the paintings. Yet Picabia was made for the period in which he could mount a doll representing a monkey on a poster and letter it "Portrait de Cézanne."

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Such embarrassments come back to haunt the eighteen works of Picabia now in New York; and another declares itself in the dates of the paintings themselves. Twelve are dated from 1908 to 1917; there follows a period of over twenty blank years; the remaining canvases are dated 1949. From the time of the death of Dada, Picabia is reported to have passed through various phases as a painter and destroyed many canvases; the ones he has now permitted to be shown are thin and unassured—colored grounds with a few scattered dots, footnotes to an altogether enervated non-objectivism. The earlier canvases, playful and now innocent indeed of fantastic machines that satirize the whole world of mechanisms, at least have a very moving and altogether sad period flavor. The several Cubist paintings, which show a personal if haphazard talent, bolstered by hints from both Cézanne and Duchamp, do little to alleviate the melancholy of the occasion.

The latest generation of French painters was recently represented on

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Fifty-seventh Street by the widely publicized twenty-two-year-old Bernard Buffet, at Kleeman. Buffet, a leader of the current Parisian denigration of Picasso, is here set forth in a series of rather bare and chilly still lifes that employ a not unfamiliar conglomeration of props—bottles, fish, tableware, lemons, and coffee-grinders. Rigidly placed and defined by pencil lines, the bottles are empty, the knives and forks as starved in appearance as the haggard and emaciated young men of Buffet's earlier canvases, the lemons shriveled, and the coffee-grinders cleaned out of either beans or grounds. Buffet's colors are few, tasteful, and non-assertive; his penciled signature, however, is large enough to become more dominant an object than one of his lemons.

The "revolt" against Picasso, which Buffet and several other of the newer Paris painters are tireless in proclaiming to the press, seems, considering the work of these men, to be merely verbal, and not much more to the point than a revolt of, say, Abbott against Costello. Most of these men, it is clear, have sizable bills to settle with Picasso; and Buffet, certainly, has merely tidied up the manner and subject matter of certain canvases Picasso was doing in the early 1940's. It would seem that the younger French painters stand in a relationship to the Spaniard that is bound to be unpalatable: they resent his towering reputation, and they are filled with annoyance at their inability to make a radical break with his influence. Hence a "revolt" that can be discerned everywhere but in their work.

Records

B. H.
HAGGIN

THE first eight Preludes and Fugues of Book I of Bach's "The Well-Tempered Clavier," performed by Wanda Landowska on the harpsichord, have been issued by RCA Victor (DM-1338, 6 12"). Whether they were, as Landowska contends, written specifically for the harpsichord is, as far as I am concerned, of less importance than what they are made to sound like on whatever instrument the artist uses. What strikes me most in Landowska's performances is the sharp clarity they give to the poly-

phonic texture, and the way every piece is pounded out at pretty much the same high dynamic level. I have heard performances in which the piano achieved a clarity of texture that was less sharp than the harpsichord's but was richly shaded with varying dynamics—performances which, if they didn't achieve quite the imposing magnificence of style of Landowska's performance of Prelude No. 8, did give to Nos. 3 and 5 a lightness and grace they don't have in her performances. Other things I notice are the retardations (as in Prelude No. 1), the distentions (as in Prelude No. 4), the elaboration of octave or chord with arpeggios and so on (very effective), and in Prelude No. 1 the playing of the first G in the bass in measures 25 to 31 as the last sixteenth of the preceding measure. As for the pieces themselves, I still find some of them—Prelude No. 7, Fugues Nos. 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7—uninteresting as music, whatever their interest as examples of construction; and the best, for me, are Prelude No. 3, Prelude and Fugue No. 5, and above all Preludes and Fugues Nos. 4 and 8.

On an Allegro record (AL-23) are Handel's Suites Nos. 2 and 11—No. 11 a more attractive work than No. 2—well played by Fernando Valenti on a harpsichord, the noise of whose action is disturbingly reproduced. With all the space left unused on the record I can't see why the movements aren't separated.

And another Allegro record (AL-28) offers a number of pieces from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book by Byrd, Morley, Gibbons, and others, which are pleasant examples of the style of their period and are well played on the virginal by Suzanne Bloch. Another instance of Allegro's carelessness in labeling: there are seven pieces on side 2 but the label lists only six.

Purcell's fine Sonata in G minor for violin and figured bass is on a London single 78 rpm record (T-5443)—the violin part beautifully played by Frederick Grinke, and Arnold Goldsborough playing his piano arrangement of the figured bass, which I find much less satisfactory than the sustained notes of the cello for the bass line, and the harmony filled in by the harpsichord, in the old Musicraft version.

Nor do I find the Beethoven Notturno Opus 42 that William Primrose

and David Stimer have recorded for Victor (DM-1336, 3 12") satisfactory as an arrangement for viola and piano of the lovely Serenade Opus 8 for string trio; since the two instruments don't produce the textures produced by the three strings, and Primrose makes things worse with his inflated tone and style and his suppression of the piano to a pale shadow.

Schubert's Sonata Opus 162 for violin and piano, a charming minor work, is played by Fredell Lack and Leonid Hambro on an Allegro record (AL-22). The performance is good, though without all the relaxed grace the music calls for; the violin sounds a little harsh in forte; the bass of the piano sounds wooden; and again there is much unused space on the record.

On one side of a Columbia LP (ML-4257) Prokofiev's Sonata Opus 80 is played by Szigeti and Joseph Lhevine; on the other side is the previously issued performance by Szigeti and Hambro of Prokofiev's Sonata Opus 94. Of the latter, when it appeared, I said that it was another of the works that sounded to me as though it had been produced by Prokofiev's craftsmanship while his mind was occupied with other matters; but it sounds like a product of white-hot inspiration after Opus 80, which is the most contrived and arid work of Prokofiev I can recall in my experience. The performance of Opus 80 is excellent, and is reproduced with better balance of violin and piano than Opus 94; however the violin in Opus 94 doesn't have the brashness in the LP dubbing that it had in the 78.

The quality I am most aware of in Walton's Quartet in A minor, performed by the Hollywood Quartet on a Capitol LP record (P-8054) is fastidiousness. The fastidiousness in ideas makes much of the material dry-as-dust, and even the more expansively lyrical material of the slow movement curiously evasive (e.g., in rhythm); and it makes the work, therefore, largely an exercise in the fastidious craftsmanship and style. The performance seems good; its recorded sound is clear but hard and a little brash.

The enjoyable Rumanian Folk Dances by Bartok are played well by Menuhin and Marcel Gazelle on a Victor single (12-1061).

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Extravagance—or Necessity?

Dear Sirs: As the writer of an article on Britain's National Health Service which you published [The Right to Health, July 9], I must respectfully take issue with some remarks on the subject by my friend Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, in his article Halfway to What? [The Nation, January 14].

I would agree that the demand for health services in Britain at present exceeds the supply. This was anticipated, but its extent was underestimated, not because of "too many Marxist assumptions," but because statistics, including the statistics of medical costs and needs, had been inadequately developed here. A minor part of the present demand is due to the weakness of human nature. A small proportion of patients, not more than a few per cent, do seek to abuse the freedom of the service. A larger proportion of doctors tend to be rather extravagant about their prescriptions. These are problems whose solution depends largely on the general practitioner. He must be rather more firm with the small minority of irresponsible patients. And he must realize that it is to his own interest to be reasonably economical about prescriptions.

The major problems arise from genuine needs. As I pointed out in my article, medical science advances and methods of treatment tend to become more elaborate and expensive. People live to a greater age, and the illnesses of the old are long and costly.

Even if we assume that real demand for medical services may always exceed supply, there is no reason why the community should ration them according to ability to pay. Relative need is a much sounder criterion, and one much more likely to be adopted. This does not mean, of course, that the levying of charges in some parts of the service should be dogmatically rejected. The Minister of Health has, in fact, proposed to charge up to a maximum of 14 cents for each prescription.

There is, in fact, no reason to fear that a community will in the long run make inordinate demands on a free service. We in America, for example, have long had a system of free public schools. The result has not been extravagance; indeed, we are devoting too small rather than too large a share of our national income to education. It

is quite probable that we are not yet ready to take the long step forward to a free national health service. But I insist that in the British community, with its different traditions and experiences, it will prove to be quite manageable. DAVID C. WILLIAMS
London, February 15

Water on Both Shoulders?

Dear Sirs: The purpose of my article, Leon Keyserling's New Look [The Nation, January 14], was to raise the significant question of what the liberal economic position should be. In his rejoinder [No Retreat from Planning, The Nation, January 21] Mr. Keyserling has chosen to ignore the thesis of my argument, which rejects his Annual Report's position that all is well and that we can rely primarily on enlightened business leadership to keep a fundamentally sound economy at current levels. Mr. Keyserling's defense of his report consisted largely of quotations and references to his other writings to prove what he really believes.

If it were true that his report "needs no apology," it would have been more fitting for Mr. Keyserling to allow it to stand on its own merits instead of relying so heavily upon the 170-page Annual Economic Review, which appeared after my article was written. To appraise that document critically is not possible in this limited space, but I cannot help remarking that in it one can find almost anything one chooses. Whether the economy continues at the economic level of the last half of 1949 or resumes the earlier downward movement, Mr. Keyserling will be able to quote chapter and verse to prove his foresight.

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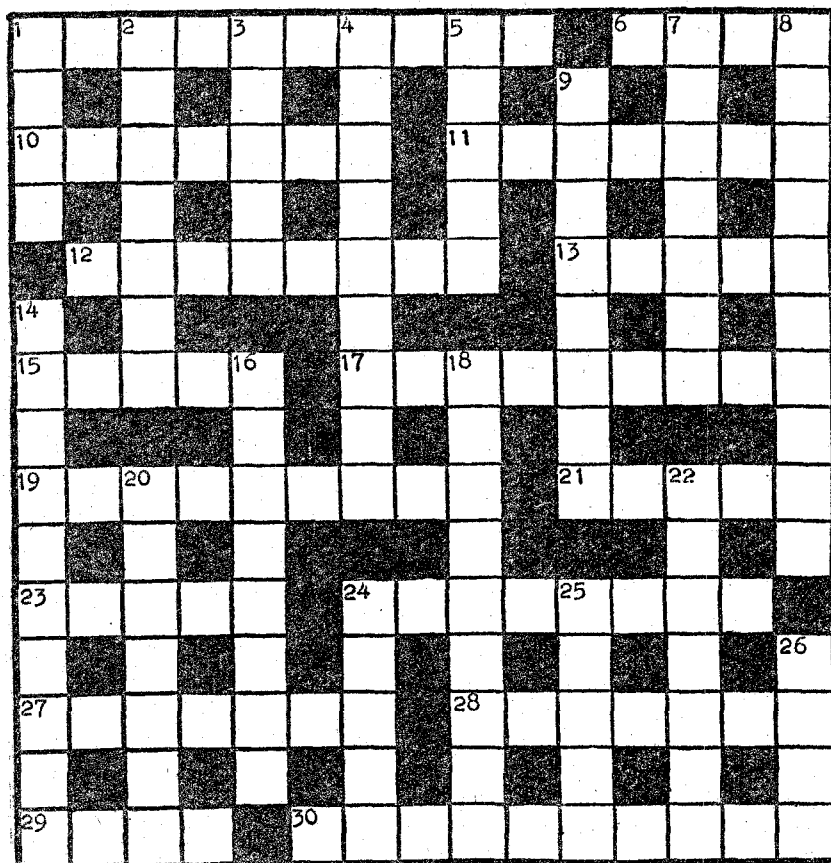
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Crossword Puzzle No. 353

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

- 1 Precise, or on the face of things, original. (10)
- 6 and 5 down. Lo! It's better than a complete lack of starch. (4-1-4)
- 10 So little time that Oliver asked for! (7)
- 11 Al fresco. (4-3)
- 12 and 17. Does the cabinet have its own flags? (6, 2, 9)
- 13 Unmarked anticline. (5)
- 15 Bakeries? (5)
- 17 See 12.
- 19 The bird isn't all backbone! (9)
- 21 Plot to get a sailor in such a state! (5)
- 23 and 18 down. Stone, Iron, Bronze, etc., are not the kind Shakespeare referred to. (5, 4, 2, 3)
- 24 The North Sea is not ours. (8)
- 27 Greasers? (7)
- 28 The Tavern Keats had a good line on. (7)
- 29 Thrown up by St. Nicholas' host. (4)
- 30 Sounds like it might be a pre-bendary's dance. (10)

DOWN

- 1 He had done it? A perfect example! (4)
- 2 Embrace. (7)

- 3 The pound has several animals like this. (5)
- 4 Expanded birds? Sure! (9)
- 5 See 6 across.
- 7 Converter apt to be found in a red hodge-podge. (7)
- 8 Leading rook? (10)
- 9 That which pertains to the royal official and child are confused. (8)
- 14 Red, white and blue in the nobility? (10)
- 16 Are pearls and beaches so left? (8)
- 18 See 23 across.
- 20 Ride was famous. (7)
- 22 Major play of Shaw. (7)
- 24 A seat easily lost. (2, 3)
- 25 Get him off? Quite the opposite with this bird! (5)
- 26 On this side idolatry, without any effort. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 352

ACROSS:—1 WITHHOLDING; 10 BLEED; 11 HUTS; 12, 19 and 21 BLACK AS THE ACE OF SPADES; 13 SCOURGE; 15 SHORT CUT; 16 DEBASE; 18 STUMPS; 24 RECHECK; 26 FALSIFY; 28 SCAN; 29 UPEND; 30 ARCH; 31 RUBBER PLANT.

DOWN:—2 INDECORUM; 3 HEBRAIC; 4, 9 and 5 OVERLAND STAGES; 5 DEDUCED; 6 NEHRU; 7 WALLAH; 14 STROP; 17 BOATSWAIN; 20 SUCCUMB; 22 SCANDAL; 23 EFFECT; 25 HINDU; 27 BEAR.

the implications of a statement on page 21 that "the support of people who are too old to work or who are unemployed or ill does not create wealth," he is told to turn to page 23, where the President's Council of Economic Advisers agrees "that our nation can afford a considerably expanded security program. . . ." Or vice-versa. Because of this studied effort to carry water on both shoulders, the Council's report had to be judged on the basis of its primary emphasis. This is what I tried to do.

The real issue remains whether or not Mr. Keyserling's position is tenable for liberals. Can we agree that the 1950 outlook is predominantly a rosy one? There is a great deal of evidence that our present situation does not warrant the almost unqualified optimism radiated by the Council's report. (Compare the views expressed by the expert economic panel before the Joint Committee on January 19.) Should we depend on Coolidgean economics, relying on the guiding hand of the business community to maintain a steadily expanding economy? Are vague and shadowy arithmetic goals the best that government can offer us as economic statesmanship?

My position is that liberals must not neglect the deficiencies of present arrangements, which will never be improved by mere calculating-machine operations on national-income figures. Far more essential is some notion of the path by which Mr. Keyserling's Promised Land is to be reached.

In his reply Mr. Keyserling correctly states that he has publicly argued against the assumption that our technical economic plant is adequate to our expanding needs. But how can anyone square this statement with the view which I quoted from his report: ". . . we do not suffer from underdevelopment or impoverishment of basic plant and equipment; and we have the operational and financial skills, the splendid labor force, and the solid institutional structure to realize in full the promise of America."

If Mr. Keyserling's reply means that he still "believes" we have immediate need for increased basic capacity, then at least his literary craftsmanship has been deficient. The impression conveyed to a reader of the Annual Report is clear enough.

BARR KING

Hyattsville, Md., February 10

A. D. A. Summer Trips

Dear Sirs: Last year a letter of ours about Americans for Democratic Action's study trip to Britain was pub-

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lished in *The Nation*. It brought a number of inquiries and, what is more, several persons who made the trip with us. We would very much appreciate your publishing information about our plans for this summer, when A. D. A. will conduct at least three study trips to Europe.

The program for the first group will be in Britain, where the heart of the program will be attendance at weekly summer schools of the various political parties, the workers' education organizations, and other organizations such as the Fabians. Also included will be interviews with key persons in government, the labor movement, and politics; field trips to factories, mines, housing projects, schools, health centers, rural areas. A similar program will be ar-

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ranged for the second group in the Scandinavian countries. A third group will go first to Britain, France, and Austria, and will then spend the major part of the summer studying conditions in Germany. Groups for Italy and Palestine may be set up if there is sufficient interest. Travel will be via ships and planes chartered by Youth Argosy, and fees covering travel and the program will range from \$675 to \$1,200, depending on countries selected. Your readers may obtain full details by writing to this office, 1740 K Street, Washington 6, D. C.

FRANCES ADAMS, Director
Washington, February 4

Two Omissions

Dear Sirs: I have just read Jerry Tallmer's article, *The Silent Treatment*, II, in your issue of February 11. Mr. Tallmer gave a list of newspapers and magazines which have bucked the trend and carried reviews or articles about Paul Blanshard's book, "American Freedom and Catholic Power." His list is in at least one instance incomplete. For one of the longest stories about the book appeared last summer in the *Vineyard Gazette*, of Edgartown, Massachusetts. I ought to know; I wrote it. My point in advising you of this is not to slap my own back but to slap the backs of Mr. and Mrs. Henry B. Hough, editors and publishers of the *Gazette*.
PETER D. BUNZEL
Princeton, N. J., February 27

Although Mr. Bunzel's article was more properly a report of a debate about "American Freedom and Catholic Power" than a review of the book itself, it was an excellent and thorough piece of work and I feel now that I ought to have forced some mention of it into my recapitulation, despite the limitations of space which led me to exclude it on technical grounds. On much the same basis, I would also like to apologize to Irving Dilliard, editor of the editorial page of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, for failing to cite a long article of his printed in that paper on July 31 in which he discussed the Blanshard book in relation to the then current dispute between Cardinal Spellman and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. In this instance, however, *The Nation's* clipping service was the culprit, for I had not seen Mr. Dilliard's story when I wrote the second article about the "Silent Treatment" of Paul Blanshard.
J. T.

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